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THE NATURALISM OF CONDILLAC

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PREFACE

The nineteenth-century critics saw in the French philosopher Condillac a "materialist" and a "sensationalist," and abhorring both, they shunned his work and handed on their prejudices. Present-day pragmatists and behaviorists, however, should be able to view him more sympathetically. The following study of the philosophy of Condillac is not an attempt to reinstate a system, nor does it aspire to assign a philosopher to a permanent place in the final scheme of things. It has been undertaken merely with a view to re-evaluating Condillac's philosophical contributions, and for the sake of pointing out certain healthy tendencies in his thought that have hitherto failed of recognition.

There is at present no translation of Condillac's works into English (with the exception of short passages in many histories of philosophy), nor is there any critical account of his system. The picture of a century is hardly complete without the story of its speculative thought, and that this holds true for eighteenth-century France should not be overlooked.

I owe much to Professor Grace de Laguna, under whose direction this study of the Naturalism of Condillac has been written, and to Professor Theodore de Laguna. I am indebted to them for unfailing assistance and for sympathetic criticism and for the shaping of my present philosophical interests and attitudes.

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INTRODUCTION

When Descartes published his *Meditations* in 1641, he was obliged to answer some very pertinent objections urged against the principles he had there tried to establish. Among his adversaries was Hobbes; and Descartes became thoroughly exasperated with the persistent questions of this matter-of-fact Englishman whom he found it so difficult to meet on common terms. The objections detracted little from the success of the work to which they were appended. Cartesianism triumphed in France, and the followers of Hobbes were confined, for the most part, to his own countrymen. But the philosophical spirit in France during the next century followed almost imperceptibly the stages of development marked in England by Hobbes, Locke, and Berkeley. It became increasingly empirical and naturalistic; and when, in 1733, Voltaire called the attention of the French to English thought and institutions, the seeds of the new philosophy fell upon fertile soil. It was not in Hobbes, however, that Voltaire found a herald of the new philosophy, but in the more romantic person of Bacon, who was more of an empiricist, and less of a materialist than his successor. "The father of experimental philosophy" he calls him, and sees in him the pioneer of the great naturalistic reaction against rationalism. "The Lord Bacon," he says, "was not yet acquainted with Nature, but then he knew, and pointed out the several Paths that lead to it. He had despised in his younger Years the thing called Philosophy in the Universities; and did all that lay in his Power to prevent those Societies of Men, instituted to improve human Reason, from depraving it by their Quiddities, their Horrors of the Vacuum, their substantial Forms, and all those impertinent Terms which not only ignorance had rendered venerable, but which had been made sacred, by their being ridiculously blended with religion."¹

¹ *Lettres philosophiques sur les Anglais*, Lettre XII. Quoted from the London edition, 1833.

France was ready for a new philosophy; but she could not appropriate a foreign system, even when it had such an enthusiastic interpreter as Voltaire. It was necessary for the ideas of Bacon and Locke to be recast, to acquire different emphasis, before they could become an integral part of French thought. Condillac was the man who effected this transformation of English empiricism into French sensationalism. Perhaps it would be fairer to say that the same movement which culminated in empiricism in England gave birth to sensationalism in France; for it is difficult to determine just how far Condillac was actually dependent upon his English predecessor, or what the outcome of the naturalistic movement in France would have been without the importation of Locke's philosophy. Casual critics are content to remark that Condillac simply adopted the teachings of Locke and pushed them to their extreme consequences. He did both more and less than this. He was not an original genius; but there is much in him that is not contained in Locke, and the extreme consequences, whether in the direction of materialism or idealism, were left for his successors to draw. "If Locke had never written the *Essay on the Human Understanding*," remarked Voltaire, "Condillac would have written it, and, praise God, he would have made it shorter."²

Few details of Condillac's private life are known. This is rather surprising for the eighteenth century, when men of letters excited so much public interest and were so much talked about among themselves. A few references to him may be found in the writings of Rousseau, Diderot, and D'Alembert; but so far as his private activities are concerned, he seems to have been quite outside the interest of his contemporaries. Moreover, he had a position in the church to maintain, and, in France, the less that could be said about a churchman, either of good or of evil, the safer for him. When, in his later years, the political and the moral order seemed to be going to pieces and there were rumors that his philosophy was proving the basis of a new materialism, he

² *Oeuvres complètes de Voltaire*, 1821 edition, vol. 54, p. 561.

left Paris, and in the security of the country, devoted himself to the most peaceful of enterprises — agriculture.

Condillac was born at Grenoble on the thirtieth day of September, in 1714.³ He was thus two years younger than Diderot, four years younger than Hume, and twenty years younger than Voltaire. His family was originally from Briançon. Gabriel Bonnot, the father of Condillac, lived in Grenoble from 1680 until 1720, when he bought the estates of Condillac and Banier, near Romans. He held various positions under the government, being first a tax collector, then successively a squire, counselor to the king, secretary of the chancellery, and eventually Viscount of Mably. He died in 1727, leaving five children: Jean Bonnot de Mably, Gabriel, known later as the Abbé de Mably, Etienne, who took the name of Condillac, François, (Bonnot de Saint-Marcellin), and Anne. Jean, the eldest, became counselor to the king and provost general, and it was in his household that Jean Jacques Rousseau spent the year of 1740 as tutor.⁴

Etienne was sickly in his youth and reached the age of twelve without having learned to read. His eyes were very weak, and this rendered intense application to study impossible. When he finally began his studies under the instruction of the village Curé, he made rapid progress; and upon the sudden death of his father he was sent to his elder brother at Lyon and there continued his study. He was very quiet and meditative, and was considered by his relatives to be rather dull. It is recorded that in his youth "he appeared almost stupid, dawdling and obstinate as a mule, and unable to learn anything."⁵ This was evidently the general opinion

³ It seemed advisable to include here some account of Condillac's life in order that his relations with his contemporaries may be more fully appreciated. The principal biography is that of Baguenault de Puchesse, based largely upon oral tradition and upon "Notes historiques sur la famille Bonnot et sur la succession de Condillac," in *Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie de la Drôme*, 1905.

⁴ Théry, in his biographical preface to the 1822 edition of Condillac's works, says that Condillac was the nephew of the chief Provost of Lyon, whose children Rousseau tutored. Théry also gives the date of Condillac's birth as 1715.

⁵ Béranger, L. P., *Esprit de Mably et de Condillac relativement à la morale*, vol. II, pp. 1-3.

which persisted until his full maturity, for Rousseau says of him: "I myself have seen a man, no longer a mere youth, who honored me with his friendship, who was regarded by his family and his friends as lacking in intelligence; but this was a superior mind maturing in silence. All at once he showed himself a philosopher; and I doubt not that posterity will assign him a distinguished place among the best reasoners and the most profound metaphysicians of his age."⁶

Rousseau was a young man of twenty-eight when he held the position of tutor in the same household of which Condillac was a member. He had been highly recommended by a woman of Grenoble, whose husband was associated with M. de Mably; but the situation was a trying one, and Rousseau, according to his own account, acquitted himself very badly. His pupils were difficult to manage; and Rousseau, with his violent and capricious temperament, was not the man to train them in the ways of industry and self-control. At the end of the year he left, dissatisfied with this mode of life, and convinced that teaching was a profession for which Nature never intended him. He departed on good terms with the family, and Condillac, for one, always maintained very friendly relations with him and defended him even when practically all the literary men of France had become his enemies.

After some years spent in doubt and uncertainty as to his future, Condillac was taken to Paris by his brother—the Abbé de Mably—and placed in a Jesuit seminary there. At the completion of his studies he was ordained to the priesthood; but it is related that he said only one mass in the entire course of his life. He continued to read and meditate, although he was somewhat handicapped in his study by his inability to read English. His knowledge of English philosophy and science was confined, therefore, to that which had been written in Latin, or translated into Latin or into his native French. He became acquainted with Locke through Coste's translation and the brief exposition of his philosophy

⁶ Rousseau, *Emile*, Book II, Wm. H. Paine's translation, p. 68.

in Voltaire's *Lettres sur les Anglais*. Some of Berkeley's writings were also known to him in translation.

During these first years of independent study he met Diderot and again came under the influence of Rousseau. Indeed, it was through Rousseau that Diderot and Condillac were first brought together if we may believe his account in the *Confessions*. "I was also connected with the Abbé de Condillac, who had acquired no more literary fame than myself, but in whom there was every appearance of his becoming what he is today. I was perhaps the first who discovered the extent of his abilities, and esteemed them as they deserved. He on his part seemed satisfied with me, and whilst shut up in my chamber in the Rue Jean Saint Denis, near the opera-house, I composed my act of Hesiod, he sometimes came to dine with me tête-à-tête. We sent for our dinner, and paid share and share alike. He was at that time employed on his *Essay on the Origin of Human Knowledge*, which was his first work. When this was finished, the difficulty was to find a publisher who would take it. The publishers of Paris are very shy of new authors, and metaphysics, not being then in vogue, was not a very inviting subject. I spoke to Diderot of Condillac and his work and I afterward made them acquainted with each other. They were worthy of each other's esteem and were presently on the most friendly terms. Diderot persuaded the publisher, Durand, to take the manuscript from the Abbé, and so this great metaphysician received for his first work, and almost as a favor, a hundred crowns, which perhaps he would not have obtained without my assistance. As we lived in quarters of the town very distant from each other, we all assembled once a week at the Palais Royal, and went to dine at the Hôtel du Panier Fleuri."⁷

The interchange of ideas between Condillac and Diderot is somewhat more apparent than that between Condillac and Rousseau, although some critics profess to find an affinity between the economic theories of the latter two. It is hard

⁷ Rousseau, *Confessions*, Hédouin edition, Book vii, p. 16.

to say how far Diderot's *Lettre sur les aveugles* may have influenced Condillac, and equally impossible to know just how far Condillac's conversations and his interest in Locke may have stimulated Diderot's psychological speculation. The *Lettre* is an inquiry into the part played by sensation in human intelligence, and the possible alteration of our ideas with changed capacities of sensation. This kind of speculation is exactly in harmony with Condillac's chief interest at this time, when the plan and project of the *Traité des sensations* were forming themselves in his mind,⁸ but it would be quite impossible to determine definitely the nature or the extent of their respective obligations. It was rumored that Condillac had borrowed his statue analogy from Diderot, and he takes considerable pains to refute the charge, although Diderot himself, it is said, never accused him. Indeed, it is hard to imagine Diderot, as prodigal of his ideas as of his money and his time, resenting even a much more serious plagiarism than this reputed one of Condillac's. There seems to be no really strong evidence, however, that there was conscious imitation in this case. The two men were contemporaries and friends; they were interested in the same type of problems; speculation by analogies and hypothetical cases was the mode of the time; and the inevitable consequence is that there are strong similarities between them.

Contempt for the learning of the past had been a popular pose since the time of Descartes.⁹ Unlike most of his contemporaries, however, Condillac firmly believed in the value of a study of classical and mediaeval thought as part of the equipment of every scholar who wished to advance beyond it. It must not be inferred, however, that his attitude toward the subject was modern in the sense of demanding either profundity or objectivity in researches into the past.¹⁰ Convinced

⁸ Diderot's *Lettre sur les aveugles* was published in 1749, five years before Condillac's *Traité des sensations*.

⁹ One has only to recall Descartes' scorn when he discovered that Queen Christina had taken up the study of Greek.

¹⁰ He looked to the past only for examples of what to avoid. Past systems of thought were for him, as for others of the Enlightenment, essentially systems that had failed, systems bred in ignorance and superstition.

that the method introduced by Bacon — though not consistently followed by him — was to revolutionize philosophy, he saw in Locke the gifted disciple of this prophet of science, and the *Essay on the Human Understanding* became his guide and inspiration. In 1746, at the age of thirty-one, he published the result of this book's influence upon him in the *Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines*. He has been frequently criticized for not having made in this work more explicit acknowledgment of his debt to Locke. The many references to Locke scattered throughout the book, and the warm praises of his genius, bear stronger testimony, however, to the extent of his influence, than any single statement of indebtedness could have done. Condillac was only following the mode when he paid elaborate thanks to a woman for her share in the *Traité des sensations*, and failed to acknowledge the real inspiration of his philosophy.

After the publication of the *Essai*, three years elapsed, spent chiefly in the study of the philosophical systems of Descartes, Malebranche, Leibnitz, and Spinoza. Condillac had earlier reached the conclusion that the greatest evil of philosophy is rationalistic system-building with its *a priori* reasoning and its unverifiable principles. The *Traité des systèmes*, published at the expiration of this period, is an elaboration of this idea and a more definite formulation of the counts against rationalism, illustrated from the systems of these four philosophers. Condillac, in the meantime, had been accepted by the literary circle of Paris; and, with the publication of this volume of criticism, his popularity increased. He even enjoyed considerable popularity in the salons of the day and numbered many well known ladies among his friends.¹¹ Through Diderot he had met Duclos, Cassini, d'Holbach, Morellet, Helvetius, Grimm, and Voltaire. His philosophical views were generally adopted by his contemporaries, and were incorporated into the *Discours Préliminaire* of the *Encyclopédie*; while the articles on

¹¹ He knew Mme. d'Epinay, Mlle. de la Chaux, Mlle. de Lespinasse (at whose home he frequently met d'Alembert), Mlle. Ferrand, and Mme. de Vasse, both of whom he mentions in the *Traité des sensations*.

Divination and *Systèmes* are taken verbatim from the *Traité des systèmes*. While he enjoyed the friendship of the encyclopedists, he was out of sympathy with them in their attacks upon religion. In the salon of Mme. de Tencin, however, religion was a sacred subject, and here the free thinkers and scoffers were obliged to declare a truce out of respect for the feelings of the hostess. Here Condillac could indulge his love of society and intellectual companionship without compromising his ecclesiastical position, but this rare privilege was lost to him in 1749, with the death of Mme. de Tencin.

In 1752 he was elected to the academy of Berlin, and two years later he published the famous *Traité des sensations*, the first of his works to appear under his own name. He left France in 1758, having been chosen by Queen Marie Leczinska — wife of Louis XV — as the tutor of her grandson, the young duke Ferdinand of Parma.¹² For this post he was recommended by Nivernois, the former ambassador to Rome, and by Duclos, historiographer of France. Louise Elizabeth, the mother of the Duke, took a keen interest in her son's education and had high hopes of Condillac's tutelage; but she died soon after his appointment, leaving a weak and irresolute husband to oversee the training of their child. Ferdinand himself fell ill with smallpox during Condillac's residence in the family, and many biographers report the tender solicitude with which the tutor cared for his charge. In fact he caught the disease from him in such a severe form that for some days his life was despaired of. In December of 1764 Voltaire announced to Damilaville that Condillac had died of natural smallpox.¹³ "Doubtless you know that we have lost

¹² Louise Elizabeth, Duchess of Parma, wrote to her husband upon this occasion: "L'Abbé de Condillac partira lundi. Je suis persuadée que tu en seras content, c'est étonnant le bien que tout le monde en dit." Condillac's appointment had created a slight stir because of the somewhat unorthodox character of his philosophy, and Elizabeth later writes: "Malgré ce livre que l'on dit un peu métaphysique, nous n'aurons, je crois, rien à nous reprocher sur ce choix ni en ce monde, ni en l'autre." M. L. de Beauriez, *Une fille de France*, p. 147.

¹³ 'Natural' in distinction from the smallpox produced by inoculation. Voltaire was a vigorous exponent of the latter as a precautionary

the Abbé of Condillac, dead of natural smallpox and the physicians of Italy, while the Esculapeus of Geneva assured the life of the Prince of Parma by inoculation. Thus we lose a good philosopher, a good enemy of superstition: the Abbé of Condillac dies, and Omer is alive!"¹⁴ To Argental he wrote on the following day: "You know that the Abbé of Condillac, one of our brothers, is dead of natural smallpox He would have returned to France with a pension of ten thousand pounds and the assurance of a large abbey; he was about to enjoy leisure and a large fortune; he dies, and Omer is alive! I know an ungodly fellow who finds Providence defective on this occasion."¹⁵ Another letter, written in February of the following year by Deleyre to J. J. Rousseau relates in more detail the seriousness of Condillac's illness, and the philosophical resignation with which he bore it, with more respect for facts than is displayed in Voltaire's report. The latter was set right by D'Alembert and cheerfully corrected the report he had circulated. He wrote to Bordes on January fourth: "You know now, my dear sir, that the Abbé of Condillac is resuscitated, and what resuscitated him is that he was not dead. . . . Thank God, there is a philosopher whom nature saved. It is good to have one more Lockist in the world when there are so many asinists, and Jansenists, etc."¹⁶

As a tutor, Condillac justified the trust put in him and proved himself a worthy member of the long line of philosopher pedagogues. He took his responsibilities very seriously and composed a six volume course of study for his pupil, trying hard to instill, along with the more conventional learning, a proper sense of the virtues befitting a monarch. He sought to impress upon the Duke that sovereigns are made by and for the people, that conquests only increase the power of nations without increasing their happi-

measure and lost no opportunity for attacking prejudices against it, or Omer, who opposed its introduction into France.

¹⁴ *Oeuvres complètes de Voltaire*, 1821 edition, vol. 52, p. 528.

¹⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 530.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 53, p. 1.

ness, and that the well-being of the subject lies in peace, and the safety of princes in moderation and justice.¹⁷ Although the results of Condillac's years of instruction are not altogether flattering, the mental calibre of the pupil rather than defective teaching was to blame. Don Ferdinand was lazy and weak like his father. The latter was grateful to Condillac for his faithful services, and at the end of his tutorship asked from his father-in-law, Louis XV, an abbey in France for him. Accordingly Condillac was granted the abbey of Mureau in the diocese of Toul.

Soon after his return to France he was elected to the French Academy in the place left vacant by the death of the Abbé d'Olivet. His speech of acceptance did not make a very favorable impression — perhaps, as Théry suggests, because it contained too much philosophy and too few fine phrases, or perhaps because Condillac seemed too radical a successor to the traditionalist Olivet to suit the conservative taste of the Academy.¹⁸ His address would hardly strike anyone today as revolutionary, nor as being too philosophical. It presented in broad outline the development of the human mind from barbarian times, through the classical period, the Middle Ages, the Crusades, and the Renaissance. After his initial appearance Condillac never attended the meetings of the Academy or took much interest in its proceedings. He was chiefly occupied at this time with the publication of the *Cours d'études* which he had prepared for the instruction of the Duke of Parma. This series contained *L'Art de penser*,

¹⁷ Béranger, L. P., *Esprit de Mably et de Condillac*, vol. II, p. 3.

¹⁸ Voltaire wrote to La Harpe upon the occasion of Condillac's election to the Academy: "Nous avons perdu un très bon académicien dans l'abbé d'Olivet. Il était le premier homme de Paris pour la valeur des mots; mais je crois que son successeur, l'abbé de Condillac, sera le premier homme de l'Europe pour la valeur des idées . . . Nous avons fait là une bonne acquisition." *Oeuvres complètes de Voltaire*, vol. 54, p. 564. Later he wrote to Bordes: "Je trouve beaucoup de philosophie dans le discours de M. l'abbé de Condillac. On dira peut-être que son mérite n'est pas à sa place dans une compagnie consacrée uniquement à l'éloquence et à la poésie; mais je ne vois pas pourquoi on exclurait d'un discours de réception des idées vraies et profondes, qui sont elles-mêmes la source cachée de l'éloquence." *Op. cit.*, vol. 55, p. 13.

L'Art de raisonner, L'Art d'écrire, Grammaire, and the *Histoire générale des hommes et des empires*. History was considered by Condillac to be the most important study in the education of a prince, and the other subjects on which he wrote were treated as preliminary to it. The year following the appearance of these works, 1776, he published *Du commerce et du gouvernement considérés relativement l'un à l'autre*.

Condillac was asked to supervise the education of the three sons of the dauphin but he declined.¹⁹ In 1777 the council appointed for the superintending of education in Poland invited him to contribute an elementary work on logic for use in the Palatinal schools.²⁰ (This occurred at about the same time that the Polish government asked of Rousseau and the Abbé de Mably assistance in drawing up a constitution.) In response to this invitation Condillac wrote his *Logique* which was published only a few months after his death. His last work, the *Langue des calculs*, was published posthumously.

The last years of his life were spent with his niece on the estate of Flux which he had bought for her in 1773. He continued to spend a short part of each year in Paris; but the growing spirit of immorality and discontent was very distasteful to him, and soon drove him back to the peace of the country. He disapproved particularly of Voltaire with his satire and scorn of all things holy, with his attack upon the laws and customs, as well as upon the faith of France. In the spring of 1780 Condillac made his last journey to Paris. Feeling an attack of illness coming on, he returned as quickly as possible to Flux, arriving there on July twenty-first. He died on the second of August, 1780. In accordance with his wish, he was buried in the village cemetery without a monument or inscription; and, as the cemetery has been moved since that time, all trace of his grave has been lost.

¹⁹ Baguenault de Puchesse, *Condillac, sa vie, sa philosophie, son influence*, p. 18.

²⁰ Théry, Introductory preface to Condillac's complete works, 1823 edition, p. 53. Béranger, L. P., *Esprit de Mably et de Condillac relativement à la morale*, p. 7-8.

Théry states that Condillac, at the time of his death, was intending to correct all of his writings and to enlarge several of them; but he is of the opinion that had he done so there would have been no important change in his doctrine. Laromiguière, however, believes that many of his theories would have been modified had he lived to revise his works; and Béranger supports this opinion. Neither of the two offers very substantial proof of his position, remarking only that Condillac had always shown himself willing to retract if he were shown to be in error. A careful comparison of his earlier works with those written later does not indicate, however, that his philosophical position had altered essentially. True, there are minor differences, particularly between the *Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines* and the *Traité des sensations*; but the *Art de penser*, written much later, goes back to the earlier *Essai*, and takes whole pages from it, almost word for word. There are small inconsistencies to be sure, and shifts in emphasis; but on the whole, and considering the amount of time they cover, the various works of Condillac present a remarkably homogeneous body of doctrine.

The *Langue des calculs* is often pointed to as representative of a shifting of interest and point of view between his earlier and later works. It is true that on the face of it there seems to be an inconsistency between the desire to create a symbolic logic, a method of demonstration, mathematical in its exactness, for all sciences, and the ideal of empirical philosophy. For him, however, the two projects existed side by side from the beginning and were not found to be incompatible. His pragmatic sympathies never condoned loose thinking and vague expression. All obtainable knowledge he believed to be capable of precise formulation, and in order that it may be reasoned on with any degree of profit, such formulation is absolutely essential. All that the later work contains, is to be found in germ in the first book he produced.

It is a singular circumstance that at a period when the slightest departure from orthodoxy in philosophy, politics, or

religion led to official censure, Condillac escaped the opposition of both state and clergy. This can hardly be explained as a failure to attract sufficient attention. His works were read and his opinions respected, not only by the intellectual leaders of the day, but also by the dilettantes in learning. The encyclopedic circle held him to be the philosopher of France, and they regarded his opinions as those of an authority. This popularity should, one might think, have aroused the antagonism of the government officials or brought him into disrepute with the church; but his life passed without conflict with either. That he was a clergyman in good standing, always respecting the outward forms of his profession, might account for the tolerance of the ecclesiastical powers. On the other hand, his scrupulous avoidance of social and moral problems kept him from conflict with the political reformers and from persecution by the government. Nor could the savants of the Sorbonne find in his writings any statement which they could condemn as atheistic or materialistic. He steered a careful course between two hostile factions, not by compromising, but by avoiding any suggestion that there were issues to be compromised. The only reforms advocated by him were reforms of philosophical method, changes which could not seriously upset society.²¹

Among critics of philosophy there are always some who try to trace the cause of social and political upheavals to philosophical theories, assuming, doubtless, that the criticism of abstract theory is not justified unless it can be shown how it touches practical affairs. Thus there are some who pretend to see in the sensationalism of Condillac the beginnings of the Revolution, as if a definite change of theory must, by the very nature of things, precede all human activity, whether of

²¹ Voltaire, in his letter on Locke, makes a remark which applies with especial force to Condillac: "Philosophers," he says, "will never form a religious sect, the reason being that their writings are not calculated for the vulgar, and they themselves are free from enthusiasm. . . . The thinking part of mankind is confined to a very small number, and these will never disturb the peace and tranquility of the world." *Lettres sur les Anglais*.

a public or a private nature. One may easily imagine how certain aspects of Condillac's philosophy may have suggested materialistic inferences, and how these may have been popularized and their practical applications to the problems of life developed, until what was originally an abstract philosophy had descended to personalities, so to speak, and ended in a revolution. To charge Condillac with all this, however, would be to distort his thought and to read into his theories a significance which is foreign to the author's intention. Perhaps the germ of materialism contained in Condillac's system and developed by Helvetius, and certain atheistic implications worked out by d'Holbach were in some degree contributing causes of the Revolution; but these developments of his thought were never sanctioned by Condillac himself nor does it aid in the better understanding of him to insist upon this particular connection.

It was doubtless because Condillac expressed so well the philosophical spirit of his time, without striking the particularly radical note which brought official condemnation upon others, that his life was serene and unharassed. He became known without those publicity-aids so common in his day. Not one treatise was condemned by the University; not a book was burned; not a manuscript confiscated; and no publisher ever came to grief for publishing a work of his. Fame came during his life-time and lasted for a period of fifty years after his death. During the Revolution and the Empire his philosophy was taught in the schools of France, not as a phase in the history of thought, but as the authoritative doctrine. By the encyclopedists he was announced to the world of science and letters; and through the colleges, then under ecclesiastical control, he gained the following of the younger generation. His work was regarded as the standard psychology by those who had charge of the reorganization of education after the Revolution; and only with the ascendancy of Cousin's eclecticism in the early part of the nineteenth century did his influence come to an end. Re-

cently, however, the philosophical pendulum has swung²² and the works of Condillac again appear on the list of subjects for university degrees.²³

Estimates of Condillac's genius vary from the terse criticism of Joseph de Maistre, "Condillac est un sot," to the fervid eulogies of Théry or Béranger. The latter says of him: "All of Condillac's works are profound and easy to read, and this virtue no philosopher before him had attained. . . . In few philosophers does one find more truth and less error. Few have followed a better method or have loved and pursued truth with more sincerity."²⁴ A similar or even greater extravagance comes from Destutt de Tracy: "Before Condillac we have scarcely any observations on the human mind except very sparse and faulty ones. He was the first to make a body of doctrine, a science of ideology." Such passages as these are significant only as examples of the uncritical way in which Condillac's disciples took over his doctrine.²⁵ Some of the judgments passed upon his work by contemporaries have less of this obituary style and give somewhat more specific reasons for approval or disapproval. One critic, writing in December of 1754, says of French philosophy in general, and of Condillac in particular:

"For a long time metaphysics has been in its last extremities among us; the dryness of this science, the slowness of its progress, the uncertainty of its principles, the lack of

²² Remy de Gourmont, in his *Philosophical Nights in Paris*, says. "It is a good sign of our intellectual health that Helvetius is coming back into fashion. Tomorrow it will be d'Holbach, d'Alembert, Tracy,—all those eighteenth century philosophers who are so clear, so simple, so human." p. 33.

²³ Baguenault de Puchesse, *Condillac, sa vie, sa philosophie, son influence*, p. v.

²⁴ Béranger, L. P., *L'esprit de Mably et de Condillac*, p. 4.

²⁵ Blakey, in the middle of the nineteenth century, writes of him in the same effusive manner: "We may distinctly trace his influence in almost every metaphysical publication which has issued from the Parisian press from his own day down to the present hour. . . . His works comprehend and embody the principle doctrines of Mr. Locke and are treated in a manner so lively, clear and forcible, that few readers can peruse them, without being under an impression that they have now triumphed over the difficulties, and the puzzling and knotty problems of philosophy." Blakey, R., *History of the Philosophy of Mind*, vol. III, pp. 156-158.

utility that can be discovered in it, all this has destroyed the taste for it; but, in my opinion, what has given metaphysics its death blow is the despotic reign of geometry which has tyrannized over everything else, and has been thought to be applicable to everything. We cannot better describe our poverty in metaphysicians than by saying that we can count no more than four: Buffon, Diderot, Maupertuis, and the Abbé de Condillac. . . . The Abbé de Condillac has had more success, but I do not think that he has restored the taste for metaphysics. His first work is an *Essay upon Human Understanding*, where he has done little more than expound Locke, and when he avoids this he goes wrong. His *Treatise on Systems* is, in my opinion, more agreeable and more estimable. Here we find analyses developed with method and clarity. These two works have had a great reputation. . . . It is not that M. de Condillac lacks metaphysical knowledge, clearness of imagination, precision and naturalness in style; but it is the deficiency of his ideas. . . . His style is clear, but dry.”²⁶ Another critic, writing in the same year, comments appreciatively upon the “beautiful quotation from Cicero” which heads the *Traité des sensations*, as one of “those little things of taste” which play so large a part in determining our judgment of an author. After an enthusiastic but superficial estimate of the *Traité* he adds: “You will not find in this treatise those marks of genius, that sublime and brilliant imagination, admirable even in its errors, those gleams which make you see from afar a light that you will never attain, and finally that boldness which characterizes the metaphysics of our Buffon and our Diderot; but you will find in him great acuteness and precision, a rare clarity and accuracy, much discretion and many very ingenious observations.”²⁷

The reaction against the philosophy of Condillac was begun by Maine de Biran but by far its most vigorous opponent is

²⁶ *Correspondence par Grimm, Diderot, Raynal, Meister, etc.*, edited by Maurice Tourneux, vol. II, pp. 203–204.

²⁷ *Correspondence par Grimm, Diderot, etc.*, vol. II, pp. 439–440.

Cousin. He writes: "Condillac follows Locke but goes beyond and denatures him. Locke's diffusiveness, contradictions, and indecisions have disappeared, but also his good sense, his spirit of observation, his taste for truth, his ingenious and profound remarks. The charm which makes Locke's works popular has given way to stiffness, dryness, and affectation of logical rigor. . . . He [Condillac] lacks a sense of the real. He does not know men, life, or society, nor is he constrained by common sense. He is a victim of an excessive love of simplicity, and sacrifices everything to the pleasure of deriving all from a single principle. He has no power of observation and feels more at ease in combining words and figures than in a faithful description of facts. His style is dry and precise, good but without inspiration. It is the style of Aristotle, the Scholastic peripatetics, Thomas Aquinas, Occam, and Hobbes, not that of Locke, Descartes, or Malebranche. His style has erroneously come to be taken as the true philosophical one, but it rather belongs only to a very particular school."²⁸

There is a grain of truth in Cousin's criticisms; but his entire point of view is too radically different from Condillac's to permit fair and sympathetic evaluation. It might well enough be questioned whether the rather doubtful "charm" of Locke has disappeared in Condillac, or whether the proper philosophical style is that of Descartes and Malebranche rather than the "dry and precise" manner of Condillac. These are matters of taste; but anyone who has read Condillac carefully cannot deny him a spirit of observation or common sense; and as for a knowledge of men, he shows himself quite as expert in this field as Locke, or as the average philosopher of that time. On several of the other counts, Condillac cannot be so easily defended; but in accusing him one prefers charges against all the thinkers of his time. They were all afflicted with an "excessive love of simplicity," and this trait, perhaps more than any one other, characterized the thought, scientific, sociological, and philosophical, of

²⁸ Cousin, Victor, *Cour de l'histoire de la philosophie moderne*, 1846 edition, series i, vol. III, pp. 83-84.

the eighteenth century.²⁹ Again, an "ease in combining words and figures" is not peculiar to Condillac. It was one of the accomplishments of the day; and a writer who did not show himself familiar with the use of figures and hypothetical fancies had little chance of attracting the attention of the literary public,—a public that liked a neat quotation from Cicero, a sentimental dedication that showed "un auteur qui a le bonheur de connaître le prix de l'amitié,"³⁰ and, instead of a "triste exactitude de raisonnement," the "feu d'une imagination philosophique."³¹

Cousin remarks further, that in reading the excellent chapter on hypotheses, one would hardly imagine its author to be the inventor of the famous hypothesis of the statute, or that one who could expose with such force the danger of abstract systems should one day end in the most abstract dogmatism by the substitution of algebraic analysis for observation, that the author of the *Traité des systèmes* should be the author of the *Logique* and the *Langue des calculs*. "He pretends to observe," says Cousin, "and he supposes; to analyze, and he deduces; to experiment, and he invents. . . . Guessing is what his vaunted method of analysis turns out to be."³² All of these charges must be met by the same, perhaps too simple, answer. It is true that Condillac's theory of method is far ahead of his practice, and that he is by no means free from the very faults which he condemns. But it is grossly unfair to accuse him of failing to observe and experiment according to modern scientific requirements, when the very meanings of these terms have grown so enormously

²⁹ Lord Morley, commenting upon the philosophical tendencies of the eighteenth century and the sociological significance of this desire for simplicity, says: "The drift of the new moral idea is to make life simpler . . . This impulse to shake off intricacies is the mark of revolutionary generations." *Rousseau*, vol. I, p. 5. Condillac's whole philosophy, indeed, expresses this zeal for analysis and belief in a fundamental element, but his is the scientific conception of simplicity, and not a mystical or a spiritualistic one.

³⁰ *Correspondence par Grimm, Diderot, etc.*, vol. II, p. 439.

³¹ *Ibid.*, vol. III, pp. 111-112.

³² Cousin, Victor, *Cours de l'histoire de la philosophie moderne*, Series I, vol. III, p. 101.

since his time. With new discoveries in physical science, new instruments and means of measurement, new methods of interpreting and evaluating results, 'experimentation' and 'observation' have grown far beyond their connotations of a hundred and seventy-five years ago. In order that we may observe to some purpose we must have some idea of what we are looking for, as Condillac himself rightly remarked, but neither he nor his contemporaries had a very clear idea of the kind of facts which would throw light upon the problems of philosophy. And if the invention of a new terminology for philosophy, projected in his *Logique* and *Langue des calculs*, seems out of harmony with an empirical ideal, as implying a permanent and unchanging body of truth, it was thoroughly consistent with that passionate insistence upon definiteness and precision in language as a means to clear and valid thinking, which figured so conspicuously in all of his writings.

It is natural that estimates of Condillac's contributions to philosophy should vary with succeeding generations, and that what some would regard as his strongest theories should be condemned by others as the weakest points in his philosophy. Thus we find Théry, Mulhaupt, and others lamenting Condillac's failure to emphasize the activity of the soul. Up to the point at which his philosophy passes beyond Locke, his interpreters are willing to follow him, but beyond that they refuse to follow, or they distort his teachings to make them harmonize with their own convictions. A bone of contention for many years was the question whether Condillac's doctrines were materialistic or spiritualistic in their implications. It is always soothing to be able to brand a philosopher with a name and dispose of his system in a word, but to classify Condillac as either a materialist or a spiritualist is misleading and unfair. When materialism carried a stigma, his opponents were eager to find materialistic implications in his teachings. These they professed to find in his sensationalism, maintaining that his failure to provide a special inner activity of soul, and his admission of a physical basis for

sensation, led directly to a mechanistic psychology. His adherents, in an effort to vindicate his moral and philosophical reputation, overstressed his idealistic tendencies. He himself was not interested in maintaining a consistent spiritualism or materialism. Again and again he repeats that he is trying to observe facts, unbiased by any principles which he might be trying to defend. His aim is to investigate facts and let the consequences be what they may; thus he fails in perfect consistency and gives his critics grounds for a variety of interpretations.

CHAPTER II

SENSATION — THE SOURCE OF EXPERIENCE

Condillac's investigation into the origin and development of ideas forms the logical starting point for an examination of his system. His sensationalism is not his most valuable contribution to philosophy nor did he himself regard it as original except in its extreme conclusions, but it is fundamental to his system as a whole and simplifies the presentation of his other teachings. Its chief claim to distinction, however, lies in another direction. It represents Condillac's attempt to treat naturalistically a subject which even today remains a stronghold of superstition. The history of science is the history of the gradual conquest of a chaotic unknown and its subjection to the ordered law of man's thinking; and in this conquest science is stubbornly resisted by all the defenders of mystery and faith. Part of the field fell at the onslaught of Newton, Galileo, and Descartes; and their victory had become an accepted fact by the middle of the eighteenth century. It had been a bitter blow to the religious faith of those who saw in the earth with its revolving spheres the divinely appointed position of man and his habitation, and who recognized in natural phenomena the free activity of God. God was no longer the personal supervisor of affairs upon this planet, if the theories of the scientists were right; at best He had only devised a marvelously economical plan

and set the machinery going,— a shrewd scheme to save himself further annoyance. But the learned, at any rate, had become reconciled to this arrangement of things. Faith still had room for operations in the sphere of the psychic. Mind was undeniably an ineffable something not subject to analysis or description, and here it was that God showed his personal interest in the lives of created beings. In them He had planted reason, by virtue of which man could apprehend at first sight the eternal verities, and think clearly and correctly, provided he remained free from the beguilements of sense.

Condillac was without scientific discipline, but in spirit, at least, he belonged to the heroic company of scientific crusaders against superstition and ignorance. He declared himself at the outset against innate ideas and intuitive truths. He analyzed reason itself into sensation, and declared that, far from being the cause of error, sensation alone was the basis of all truth and of all knowledge. Furthermore he maintained that there is no faculty which provides us with ideas concerning our own mental operations, no inward-looking faculty which produces a special variety of simple ideas. Even the knowledge of self-existence, the source of Descartes' criterion of truth, is not an idea immediately and intuitively given. It is an idea which grows from the primitive sensations of fundamental organic movements to the whole body of remembered experiences which constitutes the mind. In the same way personality grows, depending in its development upon two factors, the physiological condition of the body and the education of the mind. Taste is not an inheritance, nor are instincts. They are both habits, the latter differing from the former only in being more fundamental to the life of an animal. Mind is created by sensation; all its operations can be reduced to this one primary act. Thus Condillac destroyed one by one man's most cherished illusions about his soul, while suavely repeating the formulae of the church regarding the soul of man.

In his positivism, as well as in his naturalism, Condillac was a forerunner of the future. Again and again he urged

the futility of seeking for a reality behind phenomena, for a naked thing-in-itself. It is idle to speculate upon the subject, he maintained, for we possess only the possibility of knowing the effects which objects have upon us, none for knowing the objects themselves. The reason for this is obvious. Our sense organs, through which is derived all the knowledge which we possess, are created by certain forces in the external world. We have no sense for perceiving the substratum, or the subject of qualities, but this does not prove that such a substratum does not exist. It merely proves that if such a thing does exist the knowledge of it has never been necessary for man's existence and hence his body has developed no means of bringing him into contact with it. Until such a need does arise in man, the means of acquiring knowledge concerning the essence of things is outside his possession.

In harmony with his positivistic teaching is his denial of objectivity to primary qualities. Both with regard to their origin and their development these qualities stand on precisely the same footing as secondary qualities,—they both represent ways in which we interpret the effects of the outer world upon us. The answer to practically all of the questions regarding man's mental endowment is to be found, according to Condillac, in his bodily construction. We are born with certain needs, the satisfaction of which is necessary to sustain life. About these needs our lives are built; they determine our habits, physical and mental, they form the background of our emotional life, they direct our thinking along ordered lines. For Condillac, then, philosophy is not primarily the study of being as such, nor of first causes, nor of absolute truth. These are matters of pure speculation, and although the philosopher may speculate, he should do so with his eye on the facts to be explained and the facts available for explanation, acknowledging his fancies and hypotheses to be mere guesses. The real function of the philosopher is to examine and check up the loose thinking that passes as philosophy, and the bad science that flourishes among the uninformed.

Condillac's first work, *L'origine des connaissances humaines*, presents his theories of mental development in their most complete and systematic form. This is the work which critics have been accustomed to dispose of as a simple paraphrasing of Locke.¹ The latter was, without doubt, the inspiration of Condillac's speculation, and his first work remains much closer to Locke than succeeding ones; but little more than a casual examination is necessary to reveal differences in subject matter and method of treatment. In the first place, only about a third of the essay is taken up with the ideology and the remainder is devoted mainly to a discussion of the function and origin of language. On several fundamental points, moreover, he differs from Locke; and the chapters in which he attempts to trace the genetic connection between the different operations of the understanding have no clear analogue in Locke's work.

A common assumption among critics is that Condillac has taken over in his first work the distinction drawn by Locke between ideas of sensation and ideas of reflection.² Such an interpretation is altogether unwarranted. Nowhere in the *Essai* does he make such a distinction nor is it clearly implied. The word 'reflection' often occurs, to be sure, but always denoting a faculty of mind equal in rank to the other faculties of perception, attention, reminiscence, memory, etc.,

¹ In the histories of philosophy this point of view is the general one. G. H. Lewes says that Condillac, in his first work is the "modest pupil of Locke," but that in his second he quits his principles for those of Gassendi and Hobbes. *Biographical History of Philosophy*, pp. 589-603. Windelband also writes that Condillac only expounded Locke's doctrine at first and later went over to skeptical sensualism in the *Trat  des sensations*. Windelband, *History of Philosophy*, p. 439. A typical attitude is that taken by Dr. R. Mollweide, who calls Condillac the "interpr te fid le, dans ses deux premiers ouvrages du moins, des id es de Locke. . . . Dans ce premier ouvrage, Condillac suit fid lement les traces de son ma tre Locke, et il ne fait, au bout du compte, qu'une analyse syst matique et raisonn e de l'*Essay on human understanding*, il en reproduit la m thode, les principes et les cons quences. Il n'y a ajout  de son propre fonds aucun de ces arguments qui trahissent une originalit  sup rieure d'id es, bien loin de l . On pourrait dire   plus juste titre que, quand il se trompe, c'est qu'il contredit Locke." Mollweide, R., *Condillac, sa vie et ses  uvres*, p. 8.

² Mollweide assumes unquestioningly that by *reflection* Condillac and Locke mean the same thing. He says: "L'ouvrage le plus important

and in no sense the antithesis of sensation. There is nothing in his language to suggest that he thought of it as an introspective faculty giving rise to consciousness of the mind's activity or as occupying a position superior to the other faculties or set apart from them by virtue of the subject matter with which it deals. Locke had defined reflection as "the notice the mind takes of its own operations."³ For Condillac it is "l'opération d'appliquer de nous-mêmes notre attention tour à tour à divers objets, ou aux différentes parties d'un seul. Ainsi on voit sensiblement comment la réflexion naît de l'imagination et de la mémoire. Mais il y a des progrès qu'il ne faut pas laisser échapper."⁴ For Condillac, reflection is the control of the attention; and ideas result from it, to be sure — they could hardly be said to take place without it — but they might equally well be said to result from the attention itself, or the faculty presupposed by it, *viz.* sensation.

In his definition of the *idea* Condillac differs from Locke and shows more acute analysis. Locke had not clearly distinguished the idea from the sensation; sensations, according to his conception, are ideas of a certain kind.⁵ We might describe the difference by saying that for Locke *idea* is the more general term, the more fundamental concept; for Condillac, it is *sensation*.⁶ Locke regards ideas as the constitutive elements of the mind, and he does not analyze their

de Condillac est son 'Traité des sensations' qui fait époque dans sa vie philosophique. Dans les deux ouvrages précédents il avait distingué, avec Locke, dans l'homme deux séries d'idées, celles que nous recevons par les sens, et celles que nous acquérons par la réflexion. Dans le Traité, au contraire, il se sépare de Locke, puisqu'il ne reconnaît qu'une seule et unique source de nos idées, la sensation. En un mot, 'Traité des sensations' est le véritable point de départ, et contient les principes du sensualisme proprement dit." *Op. cit.*, p. 8.

³ Locke, *Essay on the Human Understanding*, Bk. II, Ch. 1, § 4.

⁴ *Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines*, p. 65.

⁵ *Essay on the Human Understanding*, Book II, Chap. i, § 1.

⁶ "With Locke the concepts of 'sensation' and 'idea' are not distinguished, and so although his fundamental thesis sounds like Condillac's it is different in its implications. . . . For Locke, all knowledge comes from experience; for Condillac, sensation gives the idea." Havemann, Hans, *Der Erkenntnis-theoretische Standpunkt Condillacs*, p. 9.

source past experience, that vague term which somehow includes both sensation and reflection and excludes innate ideas. Condillac, on the other hand, defines sensation as an impression which comes directly from sense; it is the barest mental registration of an external stimulus. The idea is an *image* of the perception, the sensation referred to something beyond itself. This definition is consistently adhered to in his later work, and does not tend to become obscured as do the original definitions of sensation, perception, and awareness.⁷ In the *Traité des sensations*, he says: "The word *idea* expresses something which no one, I venture to say, has yet explained satisfactorily. This is why there is so much dispute over the origin of ideas. A sensation is not an idea when it is considered only as a feeling which is nothing more than a modification of mind. If I actually experienced pain, I would not say that I had an idea of pain, but that I felt it. But if I recall a pain that I have had, the memory and the idea are the same thing; and if I say that I have an idea of a pain which some one describes to me, but which I have never felt, it is because I judge it according to a pain which I have experienced or according to one which I am actually suffering. In the first case, the idea and the memory are the same. In the second, the idea is the feeling of the actual pain modified by the judgments that I bring up to represent to myself the pain of another. The actual sensations of hearing, taste, vision, and odor, are only the feelings which occur when the senses have not been instructed by touch."⁸ The latter sense, according to Condillac, gives us our knowledge of the outside world and enables us to recognize our sensations as derived from some *thing*; thus order and meaning are given to sensations and they become perceptions, or ideas.

In opposition to Locke, as well as to the Cartesians and

⁷ These terms are defined sharply enough at the outset. 'Sensation' emphasizes the source of the conscious content in question, 'perception' emphasizes the mind's awareness of it. All sensations are, as a matter of fact, perceptions in so far as they persist in imagination, and all perceptions arise, of course, from sensations; hence Condillac, in general exposition, uses the words almost interchangeably.

⁸ *Traité des sensations*, p. 31.

Malebranchians, Condillac maintains that ideas cannot be obscure or confused. Nor can sensations, which the Cartesians had decried as the "confused ideas" *par excellence*. If they exist at all they must be clear. It is only in our judgments that we err; and then it is proper to speak of the judgment as true or false, rather than clear or obscure.⁹ Descartes, realizing that there were ideas which were simpler than any definition or demonstration that could be given of them, chose to consider them as innate, not realizing that ideas could be simple in another sense than the logical one. These innate ideas, which Descartes calls simple, are not so at all in the psychological sense. Considered from the point of view of their origin they may be extremely complex, whereas the simple perception may be very complicated logically. This confusion is often found among students of psychology today, and it is hardly necessary to remark that the pointing out of the tendency is a considerable triumph of Condillac's analysis. There is a difference between "the most simple idea, and the most simple idea that sense transmits." The idea of solidity is of the latter kind, psychologically simple (as practically all of our perceptions are); and yet in another sense it is quite complex, for its logical definition would involve the use of logically simpler concepts: surface, line, and point.¹⁰ A sensation is assumed to be psychologically simple, and so Condillac's analysis proceeds by reducing experience to its simplest sensational terms, whereas Descartes' takes the form of definition.

Condillac's rejection of intuitive knowledge sets him apart from Locke and far in advance of him in scientific and empirical thinking. Not even in his first book, where his dependence upon Locke is most marked, has he recognized intuition as a source of truth; and in the *Traité des sensations* he scoffs at the idea that man is endowed with a power of intuiting general truths from which he can deduce others. "If this were the case, then abstract truths would be more

⁹ *Essai*, p. 21.

¹⁰ *Art de penser*, p. 175, 179.

easily perceived than sensible truths, whereas just the reverse is the case, since *all knowledge comes from sense.*"¹¹ He later criticises Locke for having participated in the controversy concerning the nature of space and extension, since these subjects, being inaccessible to empirical treatment, were outside of Locke's field. "In the system of the original ideas of sense, nothing is more fruitless than to reason upon the nature of things. We should investigate only the relation which they have to us. That is all that the senses can teach us."¹²

On other points Condillac differs from Locke, but these will be disclosed as we proceed to a detailed examination of his system. It is enough here to have indicated that the similarity between the two thinkers is not strong enough to justify critics in disposing of Condillac as a simple imitator of Locke. It is hardly too much to say that the resemblance is no stronger than that existing between Hobbes, Locke, and Hume, no one of whom we would be content to describe as a mere imitator of his predecessor, although they have much (doctrine) in common. Condillac, like Locke, aims at an empirical philosophy, advocating the same method of experiment and observation, opposing the same faults in the older philosophy; and it is natural enough that their results should be very similar, even if Condillac had not been the avowed disciple that he was. He would have had to be exceedingly limited in initiative, however, not to have developed a somewhat fresh and original doctrine, writing as he did in a different language, in different circumstances, and for a different public.

It is commonly supposed that Condillac's views underwent considerable change between the writing of the *Essai* and the *Traité des sensations*. It is not so much an actual difference in theory as a shift in emphasis that has given rise to this impression; although there are some changes in doctrine, to be sure. In the later work, for instance, he has reached a

¹¹ *Traité des systèmes*, p. 12.

¹² *Art de penser*, p. 108.

more favorable attitude toward Locke and Voltaire on the subject of space perception, or at least professes to see more in their theory, although it is doubtful whether he has done anything more than work out his own. In the *Essai* he had maintained that the eye perceives form without the aid of any other sense. In the *Traité des sensations* he concedes that such perceptions arise from the association of touch and vision. Again, in the *Traité* he has realized as he did not before that the faculties themselves are not innate, but, like habits in general, are acquired ways of thinking, perfected by exercise. All that is native in our mental activities is a feeling of restlessness or need. The more conventional philosophical questions are not taken up in the *Traité*. We find here no discussion of the nature of substance or mind; and the name of God is never once mentioned. The theory of language, which occupied so prominent a place in the *Essai*, receives no further elaboration here. Sometimes it is assumed; but too often, unfortunately, Condillac loses sight of its most significant features. There is, in spite of these differences, a remarkable degree of coherence of theory between the two works.¹³ The *Traité* has only rendered concrete the first part of the *Essai* by means of the statue-device; and where his doctrine has changed Condillac usually acknowledges the fact. He has not attempted to build a complete system, and so there are many gaps, but few actual inconsistencies.

In order to reproduce the way in which ideas are built up from sensation, Condillac resorts to the famous analogy of the statue, constructed in the internal and external form of a human being, but without the use of a single sense.¹⁴ Its mind, he tells us, is non-existent; there is nothing there

¹³ Dewaule maintains that Condillac's work forms one system, simple and identical; and that his later works only develop the principles contained in the *Essai* and the *Traité des systèmes*. *Condillac et la psychologie anglaise contemporaine*.

¹⁴ The use of the statue-device for the purpose of making the process of mental development concrete, was suggested to Condillac by Mlle. Ferrand, to whom he expressed deep obligation in the introduction of

which could possibly be called a soul. He endows this inert statue with the sense of smell, and proceeds to build up its mind from these sensations alone. With the first sensation the soul of the statue comes into existence as completely and wholly that sensation and nothing more. Its faculty of attention is in operation from that instant, although to characterize it in this way is only for convenience of speaking; since a faculty is not an entity or the embodiment of a unique power, but only a way in which the mind acts. Attention is "that operation by which our consciousness with reference to certain perceptions increases so vividly that they seem to be the only things of which we are aware."¹⁵ It is an operation, a way in which the mind perceives, a specialized sensation. He often refers to these faculties as "transformed

the *Traité des sensations*. She had died before the publication of this work, and he felt the obligation, so he says, of perpetuating her name for the part she had in outlining it. Some critics have doubted her share in it, and others have only too willingly recognized it. Writers of the day who paid little attention to the work itself were apparently impressed with the appearance of a woman's name in connection with it. We find in the *Correspondence par Grimm, Diderot, etc.*, the insinuating comment: "Cette demoiselle était une personne de peu d'esprit, d'un commerce assez maussade, mais qui savait de la géométrie et qui a laissé un legs à M. de Condillac dans son testament." (p. 204.) Another writer in the same volume says. "Notre philosophe en parlant de Mlle. Ferrand, fait l'éloge de son propre coeur, et l'on aime à lire un auteur qui a le bonheur de connaître le prix de l'amitié." (p. 438) The publication of the *Traité des sensations* led to some controversy over the source of the statue-analogy. Condillac was accused of plagiarizing Diderot, who used a similar device in his *Letter on the deaf and dumb for the use of those who hear and talk*, published three years before Condillac's work. Diderot had discussed the natural order of ideas and the possibility of gaining some light on the problem by the study of a *muet de convention*. "My idea," he says, "would be to decompose a man, so to speak, and to examine what he derives from each of the senses with which he is endowed. I have sometimes amused myself with this kind of metaphysical anatomy, and I have found that of all the senses the eye is the most superficial; the ear, the proudest; smell, the most voluptuous; taste, the most superstitious and the most inconsistent; touch, the profoundest and the most of a philosopher. It would be amusing to get together a society, each member of which would have no more than one sense. There can be no doubt that they would all treat one another as out of their wits." Quoted from John Morley, *Diderot*, vol. I, p. 83. The difference between the two hypotheses, the intention of their authors, the spirit of the inquiry, and the results are too obvious to need mention. Fancies of the kind were quite common at this time and had even played some part in earlier speculation.

¹⁵ *Essai*, Section II, Chap. I.

sensations" ¹⁶ or "modifications of the mind." ¹⁷ This first sensation is at the same time, then, sensation, perception, and attention. It leaves a trace of some sort, varying with the intensity of the sensation, and the reappearance of the sensation in consciousness without its original stimulus is memory.

Pleasure and pain are innate, and with the first impression of sense one of these affective states will be aroused. Every sensation has a definite feeling-tone; there are no indifferent acts of mind.¹⁸ After having experienced more than one sensation the statue is able to compare them and to recognize some as more pleasant than others. This does not involve a special act of mind, for comparison is only the attention directed to two things simultaneously, one being a memory and the other a present sensation, or both being remembered sensations. Having experienced the comparison of two sensations on the basis of their feeling-tone, the statue may then *desire* a reinstatement of its more pleasant state of being as against a present less pleasant state. Thus desire is only the sensation of uneasiness arising from an unpleasant feeling and the memory of an agreeable one.

Critics have tended to confuse felt *need* and *desire* in commenting upon this section of the *Traité*,¹⁹—a particularly reprehensible misinterpretation since Condillac has very carefully distinguished them and pointed out a difference from Locke in this respect. Inquietude, or need, is the primary feeling, the fundamental urge to action that determines all the habits of body and mind. In this conception of need Condillac seems to be trying to find a concept which is equally applicable to man and to the lower animals, a term which

¹⁶ *Traité des sensations*, p. 12.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 55. "On this point Condillac differs from the English empiricists with the exception of Hamilton." Dewaule, L., *Condillac*, p. 25-26.

¹⁹ Saltykow uses both words to explain Condillac's conception of *need*. "Need (bedürfniss) arises when, having experienced a pleasurable sensation, the memory of it is compared with the present less pleasurable one, and a *desire* to reinstate the former arises." Saltykow, W., *Die Philosophie Condillacs*, p. 20.

describes equally well the motivating force in human behavior and the impulse that drives the lowest organism to seek food and favorable environment. A certain restlessness is native to all animals, and they are impelled by this feeling to all sorts of activities. In the random effort to obtain satisfaction, says Condillac, new ideas arise which are associated with the need which gave rise to them. The feeling of hunger, for instance, initiates the food-seeking activity, for the idea of the food and of the place where it is to be found have become associated in a previous experience when they occurred together. If Condillac had been familiar with the behavior of an animal in a maze or problem-box, he would have found it a good illustration of the association of ideas under the domination of a need, or, in this particular case, desire; for properly speaking the feeling could be called 'need' only before its satisfaction had been experienced or remembered. *Desire* he defines as a secondary feeling, *directed toward an object of which we feel the need.*²⁰ Locke, as Condillac points out, had regarded need, or restlessness, as arising from desire. Certainly, however, it requires a higher organization to feel a desire, recalling the proper object, or at least the proper kind of object, to satisfy it, than to experience a need, or uneasiness, a state of relative distress which merely calls for change. This may look like a trivial distinction to some of Condillac's critics, but it is of decided value in the study of the lower animals.

The difference between desire, the emotions, and the will, is one of degree only, according to Condillac. Desire and aversion may be classified as bodily and spiritual, but the distinction, he adds, is apparent rather than real. Regarded from one point of view they are bodily, from another mental.²¹ A passion is a desire that dominates all the other faculties; it is a modification of love or hate, which originates in the feeling of pleasure or pain. We love the pleasurable and hate the painful. The statue, in which Condillac traces the de-

²⁰ *Traité des sensations*, Chap. iii, pp. 69-70.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-7.

velopment of these sentiments, will be excited to love by an agreeable odor and to hate by the reverse. And when we say that it loves or hates we must realize that the object of these emotions is itself, for having no idea of the outside world, it feels its sensations only as modifications of its own being.

The primitive feelings of pleasure and pain also form the basis of our later conception of the good and the beautiful. We come to look upon what is agreeable to the taste as good, and what pleases the ear, the eye, or the touch, as beautiful. These ideas, then, are not absolute or innate, but are relative to our modes of perception; and their origin and development, like that of all other ideas, are due to sensation (in this case the sensations of pleasure and pain). This is not equivalent to saying that these ideas are peculiar to each individual, for, in the domain of goodness and beauty at least, the things which cause us pleasure or pain are determined by tradition; and precepts as to what is to be approved and what condemned are handed down from teacher to pupil, from one generation to another. Taste is a matter of habit, and when we habitually approve the things we have been taught to admire, we are said to be cultured.²² Here Condillac is saved from an egoistic hedonism and utilitarianism by his recognition of the social factor. While other ethical theories struggle to reconcile the pleasure-pain principle with the existence of seemingly objective standards of conduct, he solves the difficulty by simply acknowledging the facts. There is no essential inconsistency between the notion of pleasure and pain as a determinant of ethical or aesthetic values, and the theory of society as the bearer of tradition. That he recognized this fact is a mark of the clearness of his vision.

Of all the faculties *memory*, perhaps, has received the most original treatment in Condillac's hands. Without attention there would be little or no memory, to be sure, but without memory there would be no desire, no comparison, no

²² *Traité des animaux*, p. 420.

judgment, no abstract reasoning. Attention and memory, therefore, are the two most important transformations of sensation. Between imagination, memory, and reminiscence, there is a difference only of degree. In imagination the same perceptions which were formerly experienced are revived; in memory only the signs or the circumstances are recalled; and in reminiscence, only a small part of the total situation and the fact of their having occurred, *i. e.*, their pastness. What we call 'contemplation' may be either imagination or memory, according as it occupies itself with the present object or with the name only.²³ True memory deals only with the verbal signs of experience, accordingly it is to be found in man alone, and what is commonly called memory in animals is imagination, wherein the total past perception functions in present behavior. The distinction between imagination and memory on the basis of language will be discussed in more detail in the section dealing with Condillac's theories of language. It is an important piece of analysis, but its author loses sight of its significance momentarily in the *Traité des sensations*, where the part played by language in mental development assumes a minor role, and where memory is defined in the conventional way as only a weaker degree of imagination.²⁴ In the *Essai*, however, Condillac criticizes Locke, who makes memory consist of the power the mind has of arousing past perceptions along with a feeling which convinces it that it has had them before. "This," says Condillac, "is not exact, for it is certain that one can often remember a perception which one has not the power of recalling."²⁵ Likewise those philosophers who consider the memory as an imprint or image of the original impression he considers to be under a misapprehension; for what would the image of a perception be, if not the perception itself?²⁶ They have mistaken for the perception some circumstance or general idea, *i. e.*, a symbol which is recalled, and so they think that the whole perception is reinstated in a weakened form.

²³ *Essai*, Section ii, Chap. ii, §25, p. 41.

²⁴ *Op cit.*, p. 60.

²⁵ *Essai*, p. 41.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

Condillac, in the *Traité des sensations*, often uses the word 'memory' when, according to his own earlier definition, he means imagination. Thus he says that the statue with a single sense will not distinguish between memory and sensation when they are of equal intensity, since it can know nothing of external objects to which sensations relate.²⁷ He has made no provision for the acquisition of language on the part of the statue; hence what he is really talking about is imagination, for it is only this which could be confused with perception. Imagination will be more vivid in the statue, he tells us, than in ourselves, because it will not be distracted by sensations from the other senses; and for this reason it will be unable to distinguish it from perception in many cases. Greater vividness, therefore, is not an adequate criterion for the statue in distinguishing imagination from sensation; for even if they are ordinarily of unequal intensity, a sensation may be very faint, and when attention is centered upon it an imagined perception may be nearly or quite as strong. Condillac has recourse in this extremity to the order of succession of sensations, and grants his statue the power of remembering the order of its sensations so that it can distinguish between the past and the present.²⁸ In losing sight of the language-criterion suggested in his earlier work, Condillac has sacrificed a fruitful and original idea, in favor of a much less significant one, *viz.*, that of vividness and order.

In the *Essai* Condillac has already practically declared himself for the neural theory of sensation.²⁹ "I am supposing here and elsewhere that the perceptions of the mind have for their physical cause the movement of fibres of the brain,—not that I regard this hypothesis as demonstrated, but because it seems more convenient for explaining the facts. If it does not happen in this way, it does in another which is not very different."³⁰ In the *Logique*, after criticising the theories of

²⁷ *Traité des sensations*, p. 30.

²⁸ *Traité des sensations*, p. 13.

²⁹ It must be remembered that he at the same time insists that the physical stimulation is only the "occasional" cause of sensation.

³⁰ *Essai*, p. 46, footnote.

nerve-vibrations and animal spirits, he adds: "I do not know if there are such things as animal spirits; I do not even know if the nerves are the organs of sensation. Nor do I know the tissue of the fibres, or the nature of solids, or that of fluids. Of all this mechanism I have only a very vague and very imperfect idea. I know only that there is a movement which is the principle of vegetation and sensibility, that the animal lives as long as this movement persists, that it dies when this movement ceases."³¹ Thus to the question, "where is the memory conserved?" Condillac replies: "Neither in the soul nor in the body."³² If it were in the brain, it would become obliterated by the ceaseless activity of the animal spirits; and — since Condillac will not admit unconscious sensation, — it is impossible to think of a sensation being conserved in the soul. When a movement is transmitted from the sense organ to the brain, a sensation results. If this same movement begins in the brain and extends clear to the organ, its effect is to produce the illusion of a sensation.³³ When the movement begins and ends in the brain, we have a memory of a previous sensation and recognize it as such. Thus memory, on its physiological side, is only a movement (*mouvement*) reproduced in the brain;³⁴ and when this motion is absent there is accordingly no memory and no consciousness.

In connection with his theory of brain activity, Condillac briefly outlines a hierarchy of scientific law which strongly suggests the modern emergence theory. "When the animal exists in a state of vegetation, all that passes within it obeys certain laws. We do not know what the laws are by which the processes that conserve and repair the organism operate, how the blood circulates, how the glands and the viscera perform their function. All that we know is that there are such

³¹ *Logique*, p. 373.

³² *Traité des sensations*, p. 29. *Logique*, pp. 381–382.

³³ Dewaule regards this as a recognition on Condillac's part of the phenomenon of hallucination, although Condillac does not describe its pathological nature. (*Condillac et la psychologie anglaise*, pp. 92–93.)

³⁴ *Traité des sensations*, p. 38.

laws But when the animal passes from the vegetative state and becomes sentient, its activities obey other laws, and follow new determinations. When rays of light strike the eye, a sensation results according to one set of laws, just as certain organic changes follow according to another. . . . But the movement which ends in sensation is not only in the organ exposed to the action of exterior objects; it is transmitted clear to the brain, that is, to the organ which observation shows to be the first and chief seat of sensation. Sensibility has for its cause, then, the communication which exists between the sense organs and the brain.”³⁵ What the real cause of sensation is, however, Condillac does not attempt to explain. “But how does the contact of certain corpuscles cause sensations of sound, of light, of color? Perhaps we would be able to explain it, if we knew the essence of mind, the mechanism of the ear, the eye, the brain, the nature of the rays which are spread out upon the retina, and the air which strikes the tympanum. But we do not know these things; and we can leave the explanation of these phenomena to those who like to hypothesize upon things where experience is of no avail.”³⁶

Condillac understood very well the importance of the principle of association and went far beyond Locke in the use he made of it in explaining habit formation and the behavior of animals. The *Essai* was published three years before Hartley had published his work, and independently of Hume.³⁷ “The association of ideas is the most fruitful and enlightening of all the principles by which philosophers have tried to explain consciousness,”³⁸ he says in the *Art de penser*; and in the *Essai* he insists repeatedly upon the dependence of all the higher faculties upon it. By means of this concept he explains instinct, which is a “kind of imagination” or habit.

³⁵ *Logique*, pp. 373-374.

³⁶ *Logique*, p. 376.

³⁷ Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature* was not translated until 1758, after Condillac's three chief works had been published. The latter was in Italy during Hume's visit to France and so could not have met him.

³⁸ *Art de penser*, p. 180.

When different perceptions have become so closely associated that, in the presence of certain objects, the whole series is reinstated and the animal's activity is directed by them entirely without the aid of reflection, the animal may be said to act instinctively. The association of the particular movements which constitute this more or less complex habit takes place under the guidance of pleasure and pain. Condillac says: "These habits are definite movements which take place in us without our appearing to direct them ourselves; because of having repeated them, we perform them without thought. These are the habits which we call *natural impulses*, *mechanical actions*, *instincts*, and which we falsely suppose to have been born with us. We shall avoid this error, if we judge these habits by others which have arisen naturally and the acquisition of which we very distinctly remember."³⁹ This explanation of instinct in terms of association bears a striking resemblance to the modern theory of instinct as acquired habit, explicable in terms of the "conditioned reflex." It is another instance of Condillac's dislike of the mystical and the obscure; another attempt to bring out into the light of science a secret and mysterious source of knowledge.

Association between two ideas takes place when the same act of attention embraces them both, when they occur together in consciousness. "The things which attract our attention are determined by our temperament, by our emotions, by our state, or, in a word, by our needs; it follows that the same attention includes at the same time the ideas of the needs and the things which are related to them."⁴⁰ The strength or weakness of a man's associations determine whether he is a genius or a fool. Both their strength and their number depend upon the bodily organization—"or perhaps upon the nature of the soul"—which often means only proper exercise of the organs. Too vivid associations result in uncontrollable memory and imagination, and too few or weak ones result in

³⁹ *Logique*, p. 378.

⁴⁰ *Essai*, pp. 48 ff. Cf. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Chaps. iii and viii.

stupidity. At either extreme we find an absence of the power of reflection, a lack of orderly thinking.

Thought-connections which function in self-preservation have often been thought to be innate, since we appear to avoid danger instinctively without previous experience of injury. This is illustrated, Condillac thinks, by Malebranche's theory as to the association between high places and the notion of death. This he thought to be due to the disposition of the brain fibres, present in infancy. But, says Condillac, he has confounded what is innate with what is common to all men, "forgetting that the same senses, the same operations, and the same circumstances will produce the same result."⁴¹ How could we associate the idea of high places with the idea of death, he asks, before we have any idea of death?

Association is the mental law that explains the formation of our tastes, our sympathies and prejudices; and here again Condillac is trying to bring under the categories of science the obscure facts of consciousness which are too often the basis of a belief in the occult and the supernatural. Our whole temperament, he asserts, is acquired. Our tastes, our sympathies, our aversions and antipathies are determined by our earliest associations. Often the causes of bizarre judgments and peculiar preferences are unknown to us, that is, we cannot recall the ideas with which they are associated; and when these ideals are such that they are humiliating to our vanity, we invent reasons and imagine associations other than the real ones.⁴² Thus Condillac explains in his own terms the type of thought known to the present generation of psychologists as 'rationalization.'

In sleep, links of associations are broken and the order of ideas is different from that of the waking state, that is, thought under these circumstances is not dominated by the purpose which functions in the waking state and hence our dreams are bizarre and distorted.⁴³ Day-dreaming, too, is a

⁴¹ *Essai*, Section ii, Chap. ix, §78.

⁴² *Art de penser*, p. 36.

⁴³ *Traité des sensations*, Chap. v, §34.

form of uncontrolled association or imagination. It is momentary madness; but unlike true insanity the dreamer can return to the world of real events at will, or when actuality compels him to give attention to it. This kind of dreaming, however, if indulged in to excess, can produce actual insanity, and this often happens when the sadness of reality leads us to take refuge in dreams. The more we indulge in them, the more difficult it becomes to free oneself from their power.⁴⁴ The man who rides a hobby has a mild degree of madness; for he is blind to all that does not concern his consuming interest; all of his ideas are associated with it, and he lives in it and for it, disregarding other claims.

By means of the statue-hypothesis, Condillac shows how with only one sense, the faculties of imagining, comparing, abstracting, and judging will be acquired. The statue, indeed, will have all the faculties which a man with his five normal senses possesses; but the number of his ideas will be very small. After tracing the development of consciousness through the sense of smell alone, Condillac next endows his imaginary man with hearing and proceeds in this case as before, showing how the mind will develop with these sensations and what modifications will ensue when we add this sense to smell. The statue will not be able to distinguish separate tones in a complex, any more than it can analyze distinct odors in a mixture; nor will it be able to distinguish separate noises except when they come in succession.⁴⁵ This last will be impossible because noises are composed of such a variety of indistinguishable sounds and are not related to their source by the statue as they are with us. The memory will retain the order of succession of sounds more easily than that of odors, and will learn in time to distinguish sensations of hearing from those of smell, even though it has no idea of external objects. Simultaneous odors of different kinds will not be distinguished for the same reason that noises are not, because they are not connected with their causes. Condillac

⁴⁴ *Art de penser*, p. 39.

⁴⁵ *Traité des sensations*, Chap. viii, §4, 5.

clearly recognizes the importance of the association of sensations with the objects which give rise to them and with the sense organs through which they are transmitted, as a means of discriminating between them. Having made this important observation, he seems somewhat capricious in granting his statue an ability to distinguish sounds from odors. But the sensations from these two senses are so radically different, he tells us, that there will not be the same confusion here as between sensations from the same organs.⁴⁶ Here he has come upon one of the most difficult problems which his analysis presents, and one which it is perhaps impossible to solve introspectively.

The whole statue-analogy is absurdly artificial, and the distinctions brought out by means of it are most arbitrary. Condillac himself realizes the falsification of facts involved, for he issues warnings from time to time against introducing our own knowledge into it. When he tells us, as he often does, that it is necessary for us to put ourselves entirely in the place of the statue, he is only stating this admonition in another way. We must divest ourselves of all our sophistications and imagine ourselves with the same limitations as those of the statue.⁴⁷ In regard to the ability to distinguish sensations, discussed above, he warns us that it will be very difficult to determine just how far the statue will be able to distinguish odors from sounds, since our ability to relate each kind of sensation to a particular organ doubtless facilitates such discrimination in our case. The statue must not be

⁴⁶ *Traité des sensations*, Chap. ix, §3.

⁴⁷ For a modern parallel to Condillac's statue-hypothesis, see K. S. Lashley, *Psychological Review*, 1923, p. 330. Lashley says, "Let us assume that we have constructed a machine which can perform all the neuroglandular and muscular activities of a man; a machine constructed on reflex principles, whose parts are capable of summation, facilitation, and inhibition of activity, which can react to mechanical forces on its periphery and its interior, so that it may respond both to external stimulation and to its own activities. Let us be sure that we have not inadvertently introduced any atom of psychic stuff: that the machine is not by definition conscious. Will its activities meet the subjective definition of consciousness or will it remain 'merely a machine'?" *Behaviorism and Consciousness*.

taken too literally, he tells us, for it is only a crude way of giving us some idea of what goes on within our minds.⁴⁸

Vision adds still other ideas to the statue's repertoire, *viz.*, color and extension. It still has no idea of anything external to itself, however, and feels these sensations only as modifications of its own being. It cannot perceive color without perceiving it as extended; but the extension here will not involve any idea of surface or determinate shape, since boundaries will not be perceived without a knowledge of objects.⁴⁹ Condillac has here given up the position he maintained in the *Essai*, as against Locke and Voltaire, that the eye without the aid of any other sense judges figures, sizes, position, etc.⁵⁰ He now agrees that we must *learn* to see, to hear, to feel, for none of these faculties are able to function perfectly at birth, nor do they mature except by exercise and mutual aid. Formerly he had explained the fact that the eye does not perceive these things immediately, as due to the stiffness of the muscles and their lack of perfect coordination. Now he sees the blind man of Cheselden⁵¹ in the light of his statue, and admits that without having connected sensations of touch with those arising from vision, the eye would never acquire the facility of coordination necessary for judging forms and distances. Whereas he had at one time maintained that the eye, upon first opening to the light, sees things 'spread out,' he now thinks that it could have no perception of movement, situation, figure or distance,—nothing but a confused and indefinite idea of extension. The latter he feels bound to admit, for otherwise we would have to say that the eye would see color as unextended, which is equivalent to saying that it would be concentrated in a point, that is, not seen at all.⁵²

⁴⁸ *Trat  des sensations*, Chap. x, §6.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 115–116.

⁵⁰ *Essai*, p. 188.

⁵¹ The surgeon, Cheselden, had performed a successful operation upon a young man, removing cataracts which had been present since birth. This operation was performed in 1729, and is reported by Voltaire in his *Elements de la philosophie de Newton*, Chap. vi. Condillac quotes the description of the case in the *Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines*, pp. 186–187.

⁵² *Trat  des sensations*, Chap. xi, §8, *Essai*, Chap. vi, §11.

The eye *sees* things, that is, it has sensations from the retina, on the occasion of the first ray of light, but the ability to observe (*regarder*) comes only with practice and with the recognition of objects and outer space. This important distinction will be referred to later when the problem of judgment is discussed.

Condillac has conceded to each sense the faculty of distinguishing between its sensations. Since the statue does not yet perceive spatial characters, however, it will not discriminate between sizes, shapes, etc. It can, nevertheless, distinguish one color from another, and here Condillac involves himself in a difficulty. The statue experiences the colors in succession by *shifting its gaze* from one portion of a colored surface to another when it becomes fatigued by a prolonged sensation from one.⁵¹ In so doing it recognizes the difference between them. But Condillac has not allowed for movement in his statue, and if he wishes to theorize upon the sense of vision alone he should not introduce such a serious complication as movement into its 'inert' form. That he recognized certain sensations arising from the movement of respiration indicates that he was not ignorant of such sensations as the basis of all experience, but psychologists of his day had little appreciation of that class of mental constituents known to us as kinaesthetic. The extent to which the explicit recognition of them would have simplified his problem of space-perception can hardly be estimated. Certainly it would have enabled him to make clear his somewhat vague ideas about the necessity of practice in learning to see.

When he comes to treat of touch, Condillac shows considerable perspicacity, although, like others of his time, he fails to realize that there exists a distinction between touch proper and the sensations arising from bodily movement. The first sensation of which the statue is conscious when it is endowed with the sense of touch is that of its own respiration. This is the "sentiment fundamental" and forms the foundation

⁵¹ *Traité des sensations*, pp. 112-113.

of selfhood.⁵⁴ Sensations from other internal organs become added to this and form the nucleus of all the accretions brought by experience. Thus the idea of the self grows, comprising at any moment all present sensations and the memories of all past ones; but Condillac insists that there must be a more fundamental sensation to which they can all be attached and which forms a continuum between them: this he finds in the continuous and ever present movement of respiration. Critics have generally disregarded this factor and credited him only with the more conventional doctrine of the self as the collection of sensations.⁵⁵

The knowledge of a world external to ourselves is the gift of the sense of touch. Without this sense we would be confined forever to our own minds, we would experience all our sensations as internal modifications. This, of course, is what Condillac's statue does. After it acquires the power of movement and the perceptions arising therefrom, the world of space opens out before it, and all of these sensations are projected into objects, that is, they become related to their causes. The movements of the statue will be random and involuntary at the outset; but soon some will be found to be more pleasurable than others and will be repeated. Only when this repetition occurs with the intention of satisfying a need, may the action be termed voluntary.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ *Traité des sensations*, Part II, Chap. 1, §§1-3.

⁵⁵ Dewaule (Leon) comments upon this doctrine thus. "The self of the statue is only the collection of sensations that it experiences and those that memory recalls to it. In a word, it is at the same time consciousness of what it is, and memory of what it has been." Concerning the "*sentiment fondamental*" he says: "This is recognizing activity as the most intimate property of our own being, as the condition of all our sensations," thus reading into Condillac's words a metaphysical teaching that is not intended. *Condillac et la psychologie anglaise contemporaine*, p. 125.

⁵⁶ *Traité des sensations*, p. 142. *Logique*, p. 378. In connection with movement, Condillac makes a reference to child-behavior, something to which he does not often appeal for substantiation of his theories. Infants, he remarks, feel above all things the need of movement. It is a fundamental desire with them. A bandage over their eyes distresses them far less than a band which confines their hands or feet and interferes with their free movement. *Traité des sensations*, p. 143, and *Logique*, p. 378.

Three factors are necessary to bring about in man the perception of external objects: (1) the impulse to move the members of the body, (2) contact with bodies, (3) movements of the hand. These all contribute to produce the feeling of *solidity* and give the statue the sensation of encountering resistance upon movement of the body.⁵⁷ There is no reasoning or inference involved in this, however: it is a simple perception.⁵⁸ After we have once gained an idea of the outer world, we come to refer all of our sensations to sources located therein, excepting pain, pleasure, and organic sensations, which we locate in the body, and only relatively external to ourselves.⁵⁹ In spite of the fact that to attribute sensations of color, odor, sound, etc., is to make assumptions about the nature of substance which we cannot verify, we do it because we feel the need of supposing a cause, and the cause is unknowable.⁶⁰

We cannot know the true nature of substance. It is a philosophical will-o-the-wisp, a quest which has diverted energies which might more profitably have been turned to the investigation of nature and its relation to us.⁶¹ Certain forces in the external world act upon us, and we call these things qualities or attributes of matter; in other words, we assume a substratum or a carrier of these qualities. Such an assumption, however, is entirely gratuitous. The idea of essence is only an hypostatized abstraction, *realized* because the names of substances play in our minds the role of subjects of qualities in the outside world, and we naturally assume that there is a reality which corresponds to them. "*Dans le vrai, les mots être, substance, ne signifient rien de plus que le mot cela.*"⁶²

Although Condillac does not deny explicitly Locke's theory

⁵⁷ *Traité des sensations*, p. 140.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, *Precis*, Part ii.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, *Precis*, Part iii.

⁶⁰ *Essai*, Section i, Chap. ii.

⁶¹ *Logique*, p. 13.

⁶² *Traité des sensations*, p. 393. Dewaule thinks that Condillac's conception of substance is essentially the same as J. S. Mill's "permanent possibility of sensation." *Condillac et la psychologie anglaise contemporaine*, p. 119.

of primary and secondary qualities, he levels an attack against it in his vigorous objection to the differentiation of sensations on the basis of their clarity or confusion. Instead of proving that all qualities are subjective, he prefers to show how our notions of them arise, how they are built up from experience, and exist on the same footing.⁶³ We are led irresistibly to infer a cause of sensations and a permanent reality behind phenomena. It is comparatively easy to see that the so-called secondary qualities do not exist in the thing but not so obvious that the primary ones are in the same situation. Hence we assume that the latter have objective reality, and we imagine that our sensations of them are clear and distinct, conveying as they do a distinct image of their causes. But, says Condillac, sensation always gives us clear ideas if it gives ideas at all. Confusion exists only in the judgment that we pass upon them. "What is more distinct than the perceptions of sound and color?"⁶⁴ Ideas of extension are of the same kind, clear effects of some external object upon us. But there is no more reason to assume that the cause resembles the effect in the one case any more than in the other; for we have absolutely no way of knowing what the actual causes of the sensations are like in themselves. Nor indeed shall we ever know what the physical world is like apart from our consciousness of it. After all, it is a vain quest and quite unnecessary for our successful dealing with things. Our ideas of objects are not copies of them but rather symbols, among which exist an interaction and a correlation corresponding to that of the physical world. But because we do not get at the reality of things through sensation, we are not justified in discrediting our senses, and regarding them as a cause of error and confusion, or in appealing to a superior source of truth,—intuition. Our sensations sometimes deceive us, to be sure, but even an incorrect perception may be the source of perfectly sound ideas. "I see a figure which I judge to be a pentagon, although there is in

⁶³*Essai*, p. 25.

⁶⁴*Essai*, p. 20.

one side an imperceptible angle. But does this not give me at least an idea of a pentagon?"⁶⁵ For practical purposes we can always check up our illusions by means of the other senses, and by acquiring a sufficient number of correct perceptions to out-weigh the others. The correctness or falsity of ideas certainly cannot be taken as indications of how they arise.

In treating of the higher faculties of abstraction, judgment, and reason, Condillac, in the *Traité des sensations*, deserts his language theory when it could help him most. All of these faculties are merely *habits*, built up from sensation in the same way that perception, memory, attention and the other faculties arise. "To abstract is to separate one idea from another to which it is naturally united."⁶⁶ This, according to Condillac, is a comparatively simple operation, and one of which even the lower animals are capable. It involves only memory and comparison, and the latter, it will be recalled, is only the sensation arising from attending to two sensations at the same time. Here he has apparently forgotten, or prefers to ignore his former definition of memory, as the recall of the verbal, or conventionalized form of an idea. All of the so-called higher faculties are dependent upon language, according to his earlier account; but here we find the statue forming abstract ideas with no other sense than smell, and with nothing comparable to language, so far as we know. The number of abstract ideas acquired by the statue will be very small, of course; those of pleasure and pain being all that will be given by the sense of smell.⁶⁷ With the acquisition of other senses, however, the number will increase as the common qualities between objects are increased.

Among the abstract ideas that the statue will soon gain is the idea of *number*. This comes as a result of the recognition of its states of being as distinct, one sensation giving the

⁶⁵ *Essai*, p. 19.

⁶⁶ *Traité des sensations*, Chap. iv, p. 1, 2, 3.

⁶⁷ *Traité des sensations*, Section iv, §1, 2, 3.

idea of unity and this added to the memory of one or two others producing the idea of two or three, and number in the abstract. Beyond this, however, the statue will not be able to go without the help of signs. In this arbitrary fixation of three as the limit, Condillac was doubtless influenced by his belief that savage peoples without the use of numerical symbols cannot count beyond three. Their counting is, "one, two, three, a great many." Thus the statue, too, has only the idea of an indefinite number after three. Beyond this its notion is comparable to our conception of infinity. Here Condillac is obviously over-simplifying, and doing the very thing which he condemns in the Cartesians,—confusing logical simplicity with psychological simplicity. Because infinity can be defined as indefiniteness, or absence of limitations, he ascribes the notion of infinity to the statue which has no definite idea of numbers beyond three. An idea is a positive thing, and the absence of one does not imply the presence of its converse. Thus we could not say that a creature which had no idea of number has therefore a notion of zero. Condillac has failed to realize the psychological complexity of the conception of unity and infinity because he has momentarily resorted to logical analysis.

Beside the abstract notions of pleasure and pain, number and infinity, the statue will have the ideas of *time* and *extension*. The latter it will acquire by observing the succession of ideas within itself.⁹⁸ The more independent of any one sense and of particular cases these ideas become, the more abstract they are. With vision and touch, the statue gains new ideas of succession and duration by observing the alternation of day and night. This completes its conception of *time*. Three things, then, contribute to this particular ab-

⁹⁸ It will be observed that Condillac's attitude on this subject is very much the same as Berkeley's. Condillac says: "La notion de la durée est donc toute relative: chaque (personne) n'en juge que par la succession de ses idées; et vraisemblablement, il n'y a pas deux hommes qui, dans un temps donné, comptent un égal nombre d'instants. Car il y a lieu de présumer qu'il n'y en a pas deux dont la mémoire retrace toujours les idées avec la même rapidité." *Traité des sensations*, p. 86.

abstract idea, (1) the succession of ideas, (2) the perception of the sun's course, (3) the association of events with the solar phenomena.

A *judgment* is only the perception of a relation between two ideas which one compares, that is, to which simultaneous attention is given. Many of the problems which are treated today as problems of perception are classified by Condillac under the head of judgment, for, according to the definition just cited, it is a much simpler operation than the explicit verbal response which it has lately come to be. Even so, however, he is inclined to restrict the part that judgment plays in perceptual experience, very closely; for he has the same attitude toward "unconscious judgment" that he has for unconscious ideas generally. He wishes to eliminate from psychological theory everything that cannot be plainly exhibited in introspection. Thus, in the *Essai*, he attempts to refute Locke's doctrine that a judgment resulting from the association of vision and touch is involved in every perception of form and distance. This judgment is imperceptible, according to Locke, but it exists none the less.⁶⁹ But, says Condillac, if we are not aware of a judgment and are unable to detect one even when we make every effort to do so, we have no right to assume that there is one present. Some philosophers, to be sure, have suggested that the judgment is forgotten the moment it has occurred; but if this were true, argues Condillac, by close attention we should be able to seize it and bring it into consciousness, but this no one has been able to do. Voltaire shares Locke's opinion that the perception of distance rests on judgment, and quotes in support of his view an example furnished by Barclai. If we look through a small hole and see a man we are apt to take him for a diminutive statue until he moves, when we immediately correct our judgment and see him as a man and of the proper size.⁷⁰ In this case, says Condillac, we have obviously the

⁶⁹ *Essai*, p. 172. Quoted from Locke's *Essay*, Book ii, §8.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, Section vi, §7.

correction of one judgment by another and it does not prove the point at issue. If the knowledge that a man is of a certain height makes us see him in his proper size whether he is near or far, why does he appear to diminish as he recedes? He should, on the assumption of these philosophers, disappear entirely or remain the same as far as eye can reach.

The exponents of the theory of unconscious judgment profess to see an analogy in sound. Without previous experience, they say, that is, without an association leading to a judgment, one could distinguish neither the direction nor the distance of sound. The cases, however, says Condillac, are not analogous, for the organ of hearing is not adapted for giving us notions of distance and position. In this case it is indeed necessary to "unite a judgment with sense," but we are always conscious of this judgment if we attend to it. In some circumstances vision is as helpless as audition, such, for instance, as the one just cited — looking through a small opening at a person. Here the eye is deprived of many of its usual sensations; hence the conditions for correct vision are altered⁷¹ and it becomes necessary to judge from past experience and from the data of other senses. But we are always conscious of the judgment, under such circumstances; and even with it our knowledge of size and distance is very imperfect, showing that in the ordinary perception of these qualities judgment is relatively unimportant.

Vision alone then, independently of judgment based upon the other senses, gives an idea of extension. Such is Condillac's position maintained in the *Essai*.⁷² It must not be thought, however, that the idea of form and position is given directly with the first sensation of light. It comes only after experience and reflection, when we have learned to consider one part of the complex spectacle after another. For one thing, the mechanism of the eye is very delicate and intricate, and it is some time before it works perfectly and the different

⁷¹ *Essai*, Section vi, §§7-10.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 182, §12.

parts adjust themselves harmoniously to differences of light and distance. We might well expect, then, that the man whose cataracts were removed by Cheselden would be unable to distinguish shape and position immediately after regaining his sight. The adherents of Locke and Barclai naturally saw in this case a confirmation of their own theories; but other conclusions might equally well be drawn. Our knowledge of the laws of optics, concludes Condillac, is insufficient to enable us to explain exactly how the eye alone perceives space; but we cannot on the ground of our ignorance assume that a judgment of which we have no knowledge takes place.⁷³

Condillac's position in this matter is superior in many respects to that of Locke. He is right in maintaining that we are not aware of a judgment when we distinguish distance and form, and he recognizes the part played by such factors as light and shadow, superposition, etc., in the perception of these ideas. He realizes that the eyes alone have some way of recognizing distance without necessitating a separate judgment on each occasion but he fails to consider the particular sensations arising from eye-movements; nor does he appreciate the necessity of having to react to objects in order to build up associations with sensations arising from eye-coordinations. Condillac disregards the facts of binocular vision, but the knowledge of this phenomenon without a recognition of kinaesthetic sensations would not have advanced his explanation of space perception materially. Ignorance of this class of sensations, rather than the "insufficiency of the knowledge of optics," is what rendered his theory inadequate.

When, in the *Traité des sensations*, he announces that he has forsaken his previous position for that of Locke, the change is not so significant as it appears to be. The great advance of the second theory over the first lies in the distinction vaguely outlined between sensation and perception. His second theory is hardly more than a development of the

⁷³ *Essai*, pp. 190-191.

first, with certain terms analyzed in such a way that the theory is still distinctly his own. He grants here that touch is one of the many sensations that go to build up a proper functioning of the organ of vision, and he seems to have some idea that sensations of the eye-movements constitute part of the experiences of "touch." "The eye, then, has need of the help of touch to form a habit of making movements proper for vision, to accustom itself to relate its sensations to the source of the light-rays, or approximately there: and in order to judge distance, size, position, and figure thereby. It is a question of discovering here the proper experiences for its instruction."⁷⁴ Later he says: "I would not say, then, as the others do and as I myself formerly did, that our eyes must learn to see—a very indefinite statement—for they see necessarily everything that makes an impression upon them, but because *seeing* does not suffice for the production of ideas, I would say that they must learn to *observe* (*regarder*)."⁷⁵ But in correcting his statement that the eyes need practice in order to *see*, he is not really subscribing to Locke's theory, nor denying the spirit of his former account of the matter. He is only analyzing more closely what is meant by 'seeing.' He finds that there are two interpretations of the word, according to one of which the inexperienced eye cannot be denied the power, while according to the other it cannot be said to have it. The eyes of an infant see all that the adult sees, since the rays of light fall upon his retina in the same way in which they strike the adult's. It is only after considerable experience, however, in which touch and movement play the chief roles, that the infant learns to distinguish objects that he "analyzes," directing his attention to some parts of his visual field and disregarding others. Only then may he be said to observe (*regarder*). As we would say, it is only the objects that have meaning for him that he truly perceives. Vision, then, in the narrower sense of the term requires as much experience, if anything more

⁷⁴ *Traité des sensations*, p. 204.

⁷⁵ *Traité des sensations*, p. 208.

experience, according to the new theory. For its proper development touch is necessary, as well as organic growth, perfection of physical dexterity, knowledge derived from other senses; and as long as experience grows, the power of observing is improving.

In spite of the warnings which had been issued from time to time against regarding the faculties as active entities in the mind,⁷⁶ the word was too convenient to be discarded easily, and even the empiricists who inveighed against it most bitterly frequently forgot their admonitions and talked about the "faculties" very much as the rationalists did. Condillac habitually uses such expressions as "the faculty of seeing," the "faculty of judging, comparing," and the like; but he has tried to protect himself against misinterpretation by explaining at the outset that he means by it a capacity of mind, a way in which the mind is observed to function, rather than a unique and irreducible power. Locke had exculpated himself also; but he runs a greater risk of being misunderstood, because he regards these capacities as innate and only perfected by exercise. Condillac, on the contrary, holds them to be essentially habits, acquired by the mind through repeated experience. These faculties are operations or actions of the mind, and since they all reduce to sensation it is obvious that this is far from being the passive receptivity to impressions which some have thought.⁷⁷

With a single sense the mind has the germ of all its faculties. "Pleasure and pain are the law by which they develop."⁷⁸ The statue with only the sense of smell learns to attend, to remember, to compare, to judge, to imagine, etc.⁷⁹ Faculties like the 'will' and the 'understanding' are

⁷⁶ Descartes had said: "On veut qu'il y ait en nous autant de facultés qu'il y a de vérités à connaître, mais je ne crois point qu'on puisse tirer aucune utilité de cette façon de penser; et il me semble plutôt qu'elle peut nuire en donnant sujet aux ignorants d'imaginer autant de diverses petites antités en notre âme."

⁷⁷ Laromiguière feels that it is extremely illogical to derive active processes from a passive "principle" like sensation. Many other critics are of the same opinion.

⁷⁸ *Traité des sensations*, Section vii, §§1-4.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, ii, §39.

phantoms of the imagination, hypostatized abstractions; therefore the argument as to whether they are active or passive is vain.⁸⁰ "If by 'understanding' and 'will' philosophers wish only to denote the mind viewed in relation to certain acts that it produces or can produce, it is evident that judgment, activity, and freedom belong to the understanding or do not belong to it, according as one, in speaking of this faculty, considers more or less of these acts." The will has no more spirituality or dignity than any operation of mind. It is a particular form of desiring distinguished by the attainability of its object. The association of a desire with the repeated fulfillment of it leads to a confidence in the future satisfaction of this desire; and our action toward this and with confidence in its success is termed 'will'—"un désir absolu et tel, que nous pensons qu'une chose désirée est en notre pouvoir."⁸¹ There is a very close relation between *need*, *desire*, and *will*, a relation which Locke, in Condillac's opinion, has failed to recognize.

Exactly what Condillac means when he makes the startling and paradoxical statement that all the faculties are only transformed sensations; that sensation becomes successively memory, attention, comparison, judgment, reflection, is not easy to understand. The criticism which at once suggests itself, and the one which his opponents have not been slow to point out, is that sensation is something quite different from all of these things. Sensation, they say, is one mental phenomenon, memory is quite another; there is a real and far reaching distinction that cannot be so lightly disposed of. If this difference did not exist, the need of naming and distinguishing these states would not have arisen. Condillac, they urge, has been carried away by a desire to find simplicity where none exists, hence he ignores differences and over-emphasizes superficial resemblances. Since most of these criticisms rest upon the assumption of the essentially active character of reflection and the passivity of sensation, and since Condillac has not recognized this distinction (in

⁸⁰ *Essai*, p. 165.

⁸¹ *Traité des sensations*, iii, §§8, 9.

the *Traité des sensations*) these criticisms may be dismissed as too general for treatment here.⁸²

When Condillac says that all of our ideas come from sensation, he means what Locke meant, and more. We have already pointed out the fact that Locke derives all knowledge from experience. But experience may have an inner or an outer source, and a truly empirical psychology should limit itself to the former. Thus Condillac defines and delimits experience by confining it to sensation. Not only do all our ideas come from sensation, however, but they *are* sensations. The impressive fact about mental phenomena to him is not that there is no difference between memory, imagination, comparison, etc., but that in defining this difference one is obliged to use the same fundamental concept throughout. Sensations manifest themselves in different ways, and for convenience in discussing them we make use of different names; but when they are analyzed they all reduce to the same thing. When we introspect, we are unable to discover any essential difference between acts which we call "remembering" and those which we call "judging." The whole mind seems to be active in every conscious state and the closest attention fails to reveal any specialized activities or departments of thought.⁸³ The mind is very complex, he tells us, and we cannot begin to know the details of its functioning, but so far as we can perceive, our mental acts are distinguished only by the objects with which they are concerned and by their results. All that we can say about them is that at the basis of every one is to be found sensation, the simple and elementary activity of the mind, taking now one form and now another.

⁸² "Unfortunately it must be said of him as of so many of his contemporaries: 'Er hat die Theile in seiner Hand, fehlt nur der geistiger Band'; in the analysis of the human mind on which his fame chiefly rests he has missed out the active and spiritual side of human experience." Ency. Brit. Article, *Condillac*, by H. Sturt.

⁸³ Réthoré thinks that Condillac, by his insistence upon the sensational basis of thought, is trying to emphasize the unity of the mind; for the whole mind exists entirely in the least of its acts, each modification involving the simultaneous exercise of the feelings, sensibility, and will. Réthoré, F., *Condillac, ou l'empiricism et le rationalisme*, pp. 18, 40.

CHAPTER III

THE FUNCTION AND ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE

When Condillac passes from an analysis of mind to treat of the function and origin of language, he enters upon a field in which his originality cannot be disputed. Indeed, his theories of language so far have hardly excited enough comment to create a controversy, and yet they are full of sound observations and suggestive hypothesis — far more striking in their conclusions than the sensationalism. The very fact of his having included with an investigation of the function of language, as full a treatment of its origin as the times afforded, is significant of an historical attitude unusual for his generation. It was not uncommon at this time for philosophers to be interested in the subject of language, but it was decidedly unusual for them to speculate upon its origin.¹ This was left to theologians, the most seriously handicapped of all thinkers in an unbiased search for truth. Condillac's method of inquiry, however, obliges him to turn to the origin of language for light upon its present function in mental life. Such is the very spirit of his analytical method. The simplest form in which a thing can be found should be the first object of our study; and the simplest is always the genetically first. It was still generally assumed, even among philosophers, at this time, that the use of spoken symbols was part of man's divine endowment, given to him at the creation in order that he might communicate the work of his reason, which was part and parcel of the same gift. But in order to trace the origin of speech one must assume that there was a time when the use of articulate signs was unknown to man, and to do this, of course, is to fly in the face of biblical teachings. The cautious writer, therefore, was obliged to invent a little fantasy as to how speech might have arisen had God not

¹ We should not overlook, however, the energetic attempt made by Rousseau under Condillac's influence to treat the subject naturalistically, though of course his was not a psychological interest. Cf. Rousseau, J. J., *Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité parmi les hommes*, *Oeuvres complètes*, 1823 edition, v. i, p. 245.

foreseen man's need and granted him this gift at the outset. This is what Condillac does. It is what Hobbes² had done before him, and also the way in which Warburton,³ from whom he quotes the following, escapes the difficulty.

"To judge only by the nature of things, independently of revelation (which is a surer guide), one would have to subscribe to the opinion of Diodorus of Sicily and Vitruvius, that the first men lived for a time in caverns and forests, in the manner of wild beasts, uttering only confused and indefinite sounds. After they became associated for mutual aid, however, they came gradually to make these sounds distinct by the use of signs or arbitrary symbols agreed upon among themselves, so that a speaker could communicate his ideas to others. In this way different languages arose: for everyone knows that language is not innate." But in spite of the obviousness of this origin, he adds, we must give first consideration to the teaching of the Scripture which tells quite a different story. "Here we are told that God taught religion to the first man, and we must assume that he had already taught him to speak. . . . But although man had acquired some of his language in this way, it would not be reasonable to suppose that it extended beyond his barest needs, or was not perfected and enriched through his own efforts."

² "The first author of speech was God himself," says Hobbes. He "instructed Adam how to name such creatures as he presented to his sight; for the Scripture goeth no further in this matter. But this was sufficient to direct him to add more names, as the experience and use of the creatures should give him occasion; . . . for I do not find in the Scripture, out of which, directly or by consequence, can be gathered, that Adam was taught the names of all figures, numbers, measures, colors, sounds, fancies, relations," etc. "But all this language gotten, and augmented by Adam and his posterity, was again lost at the tower of Babel when by the hand of God, every man was stricken . . . with an oblivion of his former language. . . . The diversity of tongues that now is, proceeded by degrees from them, in such manner as need, the mother of all inventions taught them." For Hobbes, the function of language is "to transfer our mental discourse into verbal." It serves as an aid to memory and a means of communication. For Condillac, however, it is the prerequisite for thought itself, and the communication of ideas is only a secondary function. Quotation from *Leviathan*, Book IV.

³ *Essai sur les hieroglyphes des Egyptiens*, a translation by M. A. Leonard des Malpeines of *The Divine Legation of Moses*, Book IV, §§ ii-vi, by William Warburton, Bishop of Gloucester, Paris, 1744.

Condillac agrees that we must give due weight to the evidence furnished by the Scriptures, but he proposes to trace the way in which language *could have arisen* without supernatural help. To do this, he imagines two children, forced by necessity to devise the first signs of a language and to develop them into effective instruments of communication. "And if I resort to such a hypothetical case," he adds, "it is because I do not think it sufficient for a philosopher to say merely that a thing has happened in some supernatural (*extraordinaire*) way, but that it is his duty to explain how it could have occurred by a natural process."⁴ This remark is typical of Condillac's attitude toward philosophy and its problems. To appeal to God for an explanation of all things which science cannot solve is an indolent confession of weakness, and unworthy of one who seeks to make the world intelligible to human reason. Mystery and flaccid faith are not philosophical virtues for Condillac, and to make God a dumping ground for our ignorance does not enhance his power and glory. Philosophy, like science, is a strenuous discipline and its ways are not those of resignation to ignorance or acceptance of the simplest explanations because they seem to be the ones of revealed religion.

It is fair to say that Condillac was the only writer of his time who realized the psychological significance of verbal symbols, and the need of studying their origins in order to clarify and evaluate their function. Throughout the *Essai* he remains true to his theory that all the higher mental processes presuppose the use of arbitrary signs. The *Traité des animaux* is a further development of the same principle in connection with the study of the lower animals; and the *Art de penser*, *Logique*, and *Langue des calculs* are based upon it. The *Traité des sensations* is alone in its neglect of this all important doctrine; but in this work Condillac's special purpose is to prove the primacy of sensation, and he loses sight temporarily of an idea far more original and significant, though less direct in its appeal to the public. His contribu-

⁴ *Essai*, p. 194, footnote.

tion to the theory of language attracted little attention at the time and has had practically no part in perpetuating his name. It is generally mentioned by commentators, to be sure, but very briefly and uncritically, without any appreciation of its real value, even on the part of those friendly to the system as a whole. It is agreed to be more original than the rest of the *Essai*, but to have little importance for philosophical theory. Théry thinks that it is interesting but rather an unfortunate lapse into hypothesis. Adversaries, on the other hand, condemn the theory as well as the project, and find in the conception of reason as the product of language only a stupid confusion of cause and effect. Language, they say, is obviously the work of human reason; to say then that we owe reason to the use of speech is sheer paradox.⁵

Recently the subject of language has assumed a much more prominent place in psychology and Condillac's ideas on the subject stand a better chance of being appreciated fairly. The new position of language is due to a change, both in the attitude toward such an investigation and in the method of procedure — a change itself brought about by the doctrine of evolution. As long as language was regarded as the God-given organ of human intercourse, and reason as its necessary and sufficient condition, it offered a very limited field for scientific speculation. Little more could be investigated concerning it than rules of syntax and etymology and modes

⁵ Cousin's criticism is typical of his group. Language, he says, can only be considered as the *cause* of thought, if we understand it as an effect which reacts upon its cause, a relationship analogous to that which exists between art and society, in which human nature produces art and is in turn modified by what it has produced. *Will*, and not reason, says Cousin, is the internal principle of reason. Judgment is the power of perceiving the true, and thus power in its first exercise is independent of language. Condillac should have explained *why* men use language signs and animals do not, says Cousin. Instead of saying that man is superior to animals because he has language, Condillac should ask why man possesses language. The vice of Condillac and his school is to look for a principle of superiority outside of man, in language or physical organization, instead of in human nature and the human faculties. Cousin, *Op. cit.*, p. 96-99. Cousin should have known that Condillac did ask *why* man possesses language and suggested several reasons based, to be sure, largely upon facts of physical organization. He was not looking for a teleological cause.

of composition. Even philological studies were severely restricted, since any theory that emphasized development involved implicitly the subject of origin and was, therefore, dangerously complicated with religious issues. Of late years much light has been shed on psychological problems by the discoveries of ethnologists regarding the forms of language and symbolic communication among savage peoples; while other investigators have turned their attention to the acquisition of language by children and the variations to which it is subject. The assumption underlying all this study is that language has arisen naturally at a certain stage in man's organic development; that it is constantly and imperceptibly undergoing change; and that there is a reciprocal influence of language upon thought and thought upon language.

In his treatment of language, as we have remarked before, the analytical method, for Condillac, has become the historical method. Naturally he is not conscious of it as "the historical method" but that is what we would call it today, though we are accustomed to think of it as a nineteenth century product. He is one of the few men of his century, to be sure, who saw, or tried to see, things in their historical relations. He has attempted to do for the study of language what Spinoza did for higher criticism, that is, to view facts in their proper settings, in relation to the conditions under which they are found, without reading into them the significance with which succeeding generations have endowed them. It seems a commonplace today to remind men that they must interpret the social phenomena of former ages not according to present standards but from the point of view of one living in a given time and place, but it was not so in Condillac's day. To be sure, the facts available for a study of early languages were exceedingly sparse, and Condillac has to supply the deficiency by a generous use of hypothesis. The cases which he cites are little more than anecdotes, and his historical information is often inexact; but he has at least attempted to substantiate his theories by observed facts and to make use of historical data wherever possible. Too often

he accepts uncritically the report of casual observers, and makes use of experiment without questioning the authenticity of the source or the conditions under which it was performed; but psychological experimentation, as has been remarked before, was then far from being a well defined scientific procedure.

Condillac maintains uncompromisingly the thesis that human reason has come as a result of the use of language, and that the latter, rather than the former, is the real basis of distinction between man and the lower animals. The degree to which arbitrary signs have been developed is the result, not of a special divine dispensation, but of man's particular physical organization which has facilitated the growth of what was originally an accidental discovery. "Rob a man by degrees of writing, of words, gestures, and other signs, and you will have reduced a superior mind to imbecility."⁶ To bear out this statement Condillac cites a case, reported in the Proceedings of the Academy of Sciences for 1703, of a young man of Chartres who had been born deaf and dumb, but who suddenly regained his hearing and began to speak. He listened for several months to what was going on about him, practiced words to himself, tried to learn their meanings, and then surprised the entire community by announcing that he could speak. Truly a dramatic situation! Theologians then questioned him to ascertain what had been his conception of God, the soul, good and evil, while he lived in mental isolation; and they found to their surprise, that the youth, although his religious behavior had been exemplary, and his genuflections and crosses had been made with unfailing correctness, possessed absolutely no idea of the meaning of these signs. He had no notion of God, of life or death, in fact, he had never so much as thought of these things. "The great source of ideas in men," concludes the writer of this account, "is in their reciprocal commerce."⁷

In Condillac's opinion, this occasion would have furnished an opportunity for learning some really significant facts, and

⁶ *Essai*, Section iv, §11.

⁷ *Essai*, pp. 139-141.

he regrets that it was wasted on the foolish questions of the theologians. He would have liked to ask the young man what ideas were among the first to be acquired after he regained his hearing, and from what source he received most help in forming ideas; from external objects, from words which he heard, or from his own reflection. He might have known these things, Condillac thinks, since he was mature enough to be attentive to the processes within himself when they were aroused⁸—as a child, of course, would not have been. The case is far different with normal individuals, for they acquire ideas so early that they are unable to reflect upon the way in which they came about. Today we would tend to be skeptical about the results of Condillac's suggested inquiries; but faith in the validity of introspective analysis was much stronger in his time than it is today. In any case, since the theologians threw away their opportunity of asking the right kind of questions, nothing remains for Condillac but to supply the missing information by "conjecture." This he proceeds to do.

"I imagine that during these twenty-three years, this young man was practically in the condition in which I have represented an individual whose mind is not yet master of its own attention, determined not by choice but by the strength of the forces acting upon it. To be sure, if he had been brought up among men he would have received from them the help necessary for associating some of his ideas with signs. Doubtless he could make known by gestures his principal needs and the things with which to satisfy them; but since he lacked names for designating those things which were not so important, and was not sufficiently interested to derive help from any external source, he never thought except when he was having an actual perception. His attention, attracted only by vivid sensations, ceased with these sensations. Contemplation, accordingly, had no exercise, to say nothing of the memory."⁹

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 141. *Art de penser*, p. 59.

⁹ *Essai*, pp. 141-142.

Without the use of arbitrary signs, then, the mind exists in a state of lethargy, entirely preoccupied with passing sensations. Lacking a means of calling up ideas, it will be unable to marshal them in orderly sequence so as to follow trains of reasoning, to compose or decompose its ideas. And since it has no conjunctions or prepositions it will be unable to form ideas of relationship or to embody them in a judgment. The exact imitation of the religious forms on the part of the young man of Chartres was precisely what might be expected in a case of this kind. Not having the customary distractions of hearing and speaking, and being so limited in his reflection by the dearth of signs, his attention was freer to notice details of action, and his imitation was more mechanical and less subject to variation. For the same reason his imagination must have been much more acute, and his perceptions sharper. It was to be expected that he would have no idea of death or of any of those abstractions which are made possible by language. If he had been brought up among bears instead of men, says Condillac, he would have made their cries and walked on all fours.

Such a case was actually at Condillac's disposal. A story was recounted of a child about ten years old, who had been found in the forests of Lithuania in 1694, living with bears and, as it was supposed, having been reared by them from infancy. The child, when discovered, could make no human sounds, and walked on all fours. Indeed, he exhibited not one sign of the divine reason commonly supposed to be inherent in the nature of man. After a few months in the society of human beings, he learned to speak, but, to the great disappointment of his interrogators, could remember not one thing concerning his former state.¹⁰ This, says Condillac, is what they might have foreseen. The child may have had a few lingering impressions which the imagination could play over, but these were soon obliterated in the flood of new impressions; and even if they had remained, he never could have expressed them in his present language. He had no

¹⁰ *Essai*, Section iv, Chap. ii, §23.

power of reflection — for this presupposes words — and no ideas to reflect upon.¹¹ The bear-language which he probably used when he lived in the forests, is not, properly speaking, a language at all, consisting as it does only of natural signs which have not become conventionalized, and which accordingly do not have the function of standing for definite ideas. These natural signs had no relation to the child's later state, and he could no more express his present feelings by them, than he could describe his past state in terms of his present life, that is, in his present vocabulary. He could not even notice any *change* between his two states of existence, for there were no terms common to both. His past life was as if it had never been, as far as his present experiences were concerned; although, if he had been taken back to the forest before he had lost all of the traces of his former existence, he would doubtless have responded in the old way to food, danger, other animals, etc., and so, in a sense, he could be said to have "remembered" them. This simple functioning of the past in present experience, however, Condillac prefers to call 'imagination' or 'habit,' reserving the term 'memory' for the recall of verbal symbols.

The similarity of this theory of Condillac's to a recent development of Behaviorism is very striking, if not profound, and deserves a passing comment. Watson, the most vigorous exponent of this new psychology, has lately advanced the theory that un verbalized behavior is not remembered, and he has endeavored to support this thesis by the results of experimentation upon infants. Our failure to recall childhood experiences is due, he contends, not to the suppression of such memories in the subconscious — as the Freudians would have us believe — but to the fact that they have never been cast in the verbal-motor pattern which is a condition of all thought. An experience, to be reflectively lived over, must be verbalized, *i. e.*, must have a verbal correlate which takes its place in subsequent thought. Watson has tried to show how certain well established habits of early infancy, before names have

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

become attached to objects, will, after periods of varying length, fail to be reinstated when the same stimulus is presented which originally called them out. Condillac's case of the Lithuanian boy, if it could be properly verified and made to conform to scientific requirements, would serve Watson's purpose quite as well as it does his own. Condillac, to be sure, had no conception of the word as a muscular habit, and there is little to justify a detailed comparison of their doctrines.

Condillac nowhere explains his conception of the word as a mental entity, either in terms of neurological or psychological processes. How it functions in reasoning or memory we are not told; all we know is that it is the substance of which thoughts are made. In answer to the question what or where the symbol is when it is not functioning, Condillac would probably have replied exactly as he did to the question as to where the idea is before it is recalled: "Nowhere." Certain brain processes cause a perception; the same ones reinstated in slightly different order cause a remembered perception. The question of its place of conservation is absurd. Attaching names to objects is the most familiar type of association, and when the process is perfected the name has come to stand for the object in thought; it is the counter of actual experience.

Other philosophers who had attempted to analyze the function of language saw part of the truth but not all of it; they realized the importance of language for the higher reasoning processes but not its fundamental significance in all kinds of thinking which depend upon memory. Thus Locke, along with others of his time, had assumed that the mind forms propositions without the use of words, joining or separating the ideas themselves. He even thought that animals can reason, not upon general ideas, to be sure, but upon particular ones,—not realizing, says Condillac, that reflection and indeed all mental operations except sensation, perception, and imagination, depend upon the use of conventional symbols. He had guessed their importance for the conception of

numbers, but even here his position is somewhat uncertain.¹² But Locke's interest in language was not directed to its origin and its place in human development, but to what we rather call its *static* significance. The attention which he devotes to words and their meanings is for the purpose, as he says, "of understanding better the use and force of language as subservient to instruction and knowledge;" for which purpose he proposes to consider, first, "to what it is that names in the use of language are immediately applied, . . . and secondly, what the sorts and kinds . . . of things are for which general names stand, wherein they consist and how they come to be made. These being well looked into, we shall the better come to find the right use of words, the natural advantages and defects of language, and the remedies that ought to be used to avoid the inconveniences of obscurity or uncertainty in the signification of words; without which it is impossible to discourse with any clearness or order concerning knowledge: which being conversant about propositions, and those most commonly universal ones, has greater connection with words than perhaps is suspected."¹³ Words, for Locke, are the sensible signs necessary for communication, and their primary purpose is that of communication. "Man, though he have a great variety of thoughts, and such from which others as well as himself might receive profit and delight, yet they are all within his own breast, invisible and hidden from others, nor can of themselves be made to appear. The comfort and advantage of society not being to be had without communication of thoughts, it was necessary that man should find out some external signs, whereby those invisible ideas which his thoughts are made up of might be made known to others. For this purpose nothing was so fit either for plenty or for quickness, as those articulate sounds which with so much ease and variety, he found himself able to make."¹⁴

¹² *Essai*, Section iv, Chap. ii, §27.

¹³ Locke, *Essay on the Human Understanding*, Book III, Chap. ii, §1.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

Condillac recognizes the obvious function of language in the communication of ideas, but this, for him, is only a secondary purpose. Before communicating ideas it is necessary for us to have some. The fundamental use of words is to convert mere impressions into ideas which are necessary for reflection, judgment, and reason. Words are the concrete materials, the tools of thought. "Words, or other equivalent signs, hold, so to speak, in our minds the place which subjects occupy outside us. And as the qualities of things could not coexist outside us without the subjects in which they are united, their ideas could not coexist in our mind without the signs in which they are united in the same way."¹⁵ Accordingly, a multitude of perceptions or sensations would be worth no more than one, so far as the other faculties of thought are concerned, without the use of words to bind them together and to express their qualities and the relationships between them.¹⁶ We have more signs in our minds than ideas which correspond to them, says Condillac, in what looks like an attempt to be paradoxical. The majority of men would think it quite impossible to have in the mind words with no ideas attached to them; and they prefer to think of the mind as a great reservoir of ideas, only a few of which can be expressed in words. But we learn words, Condillac explains, long before we are able to reflect. These words remain with us, uncriticised and only vaguely suggestive; and too often, unfortunately, they enter into our discourse with all this vagueness and confusion. Condillac has much to say regarding the failure to use words in their proper denotations, as a source of error in science and philosophy; and an important part of the *Essai* is taken up with the means of correcting this defect. This point, however, can be deferred to the discussion of his ideas of method.

Arithmetic is one of the most obvious examples of the necessity of signs, he thinks,—thus showing the ancient predilection for mathematical illustrations which the empiricists

¹⁵ *Essai*, pp. 134–135.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Section iv, Chap. i, §§ 9, 11.

share with the rationalists. Without signs we would never be able to conceive of numbers beyond the first few digits. Condillac confesses that he is unable to perceive clearly any number beyond three, without grouping the objects imagined into twos or threes. If we had no numerical symbols we would have to continue to add unity to unity, and there is a limit to which we can carry such an operation and have a distinct perception of the result. Locke mentions certain American Indian tribes that have no idea of the number one thousand, because they have names for no numbers beyond twenty. It would be just as difficult, adds Condillac, for them to conceive of twenty-one as one thousand; for if they had no repeating system of digits which could be extended beyond twenty, they must have used distinct and unrelated names for each number. Their number-system was limited, then, by the number twenty, and to enlarge it to include twenty-one would necessitate the invention of a radically new sign — a thing which seldom happens. The use of signs which denote collections makes it as simple for us to use large numbers as small ones; and the rules by which we compound these signs enable us to carry them out indefinitely.

The limitation of man's mind makes the use of signs necessary for his thought.¹⁷ It is impossible for the mind, finite as it is, to bring into the scope of its attention simultaneously any number of ideas. Hence it combines them under one name and uses this name as a unit. "There are two cases when we unite simple ideas under a single sign: we make them upon models or without models."¹⁸ The idea of *gold* is an example of the first kind. "I see a body extended, of a certain form, in rest, yellow, fusible, ductile, malleable, heavy, soluble in *aqua regia*, etc. I cannot embrace all these qualities in the same attention, and can only recall them by passing them in review before my mind. To single out any one quality, color, for instance, to represent the whole, would

¹⁷ God, being infinite, has no need of language, according to Condillac. A strange consequence, indeed, of his theory.

¹⁸ *Essai*, p. 13. In this classification Condillac is following Locke's distinction between *substances* and *modes*.

be to confuse this object with others having the same quality and to disregard all the rest of its equally important characters. To escape this danger, I invent the word *gold*, and I accustom myself to attach to it all the ideas which I have just enumerated. Then when I think of the notion of gold, I perceive only the sound *gold*, and I remember having associated with it a certain number of simple ideas which I cannot recall all at once but which I have seen coexist in the same object, and which I can recall in succession if I please."¹⁹

The necessity of signs is still more apparent in the case of those ideas which are formed without models. We have need of certain archetypal notions, concepts which bring together notions which we have found united in experience. The only bond they have, the only reality which they possess, lies in the word under which we combine them. Such words are essential for all reflection upon moral or political subjects; indeed, we cannot properly reflect upon any problem without using them. To try to do so would be like trying to calculate by saying over and over again, "one, one, one," without any word to signify the resulting collection.

Although Condillac realizes, to a degree which Locke never approached, the function of words in forming general ideas, yet when he treats of abstract ideas apart from the subject of language, he gives practically the same explanation as Locke of the way in which they are formed. According to the latter, men form abstract ideas by observing common qualities of particular things and comprehending them under one name, ignoring the points in which they differ.²⁰ Having annexed names to them, they are able "to consider and discourse upon things in bundles, as it were, for the easier and readier improvement and communication of their knowledge, which would advance but slowly were their words and thoughts confined to particulars."²¹ Condillac says, in a passage which does little more than paraphrase this: "We have seen that abstract notions are formed by disregarding

¹⁹ *Essai*, pp. 133-134.

²⁰ Locke, *Essay on the Human Understanding*, Book iii, Chap. iii, §9.

²¹ *Ibid.*, Book iii, Chap. iii, §20.

the properties by which things are distinguished, to consider only those qualities in which they agree. Let us cease to consider what determines extension as such, a whole as such, and we will have the abstract ideas of extension and whole. These sorts of ideas are, then, only names that we have given to things considered in the aspects which they have in common, that is why we call them *general ideas*.”²² With regard to the origin of these ideas, he merely quotes Locke’s description of the way in which a child generalizes his particular idea of *man*.

But while his general account of abstract ideas is the same as Locke’s, his description of the way in which the name functions is suggestive of Hume. The latter had followed Berkeley in a radical departure from Locke on this subject; in fact, he regarded Berkeley’s theory as “one of the greatest and most valuable discoveries which have been made of late years in the republic of letters.”²³ Like Berkeley, he believed “that all general ideas are nothing but particular ones, annexed to a certain term which gives them more extensive signification and makes them recall upon occasion other individuals which are similar.” The general idea, then, is not formed by abstracting, but by including a great number of similar particulars under one name which serves to bring up any one of these as the occasion may require. “Abstract ideas are, therefore, in themselves individual, however they may become general in their representation. The image in the mind is only that of a particular object, though the application of it in our reasoning be the same as if it were universal.”²⁴ This description might fit ideas formed upon models, as Condillac sees them, but would hardly do for the ideas formed without models.

Signs, Condillac tells us, are of three kinds: accidental, natural, and conventional. It is only when they have become conventionalized that they constitute a true language. The

²² *Essai*, pp. 155–156.

²³ Hume, *Treatise on Human Nature*, Section vii.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

lower animals have natural and accidental signs, but these are inadequate for the mental processes which depend upon memory.²⁵ Properly speaking, therefore, animals cannot be said to have memory. Their actions are governed entirely by imagination, and over this they have no control. "It is not memory which leads an animal to the place where the day before it found food. He repeats this performance because the feeling of hunger is so strongly associated with the idea of the place and the way that leads there, that the latter are aroused as soon as the former is experienced."²⁶ If the terms 'idea of hunger' and 'idea of place' suggest to the reader that there is something more than mere perception in the animal's reaction to its hunger and the place to find food, it must be remembered that Condillac had no general non-committal word like our 'response' or 'reaction' with which to describe the animal's behavior without attributing to it ideas similar to ours. The point is that without the use of arbitrary signs, the imagination cannot be controlled, that is, thinking cannot be purposive. The animal's action will always follow the pattern formed by previous experience; and without verbal symbols for these experiences it will be unable to combine them in new ways and project them into the future, to meet situations in an abstract form before they present themselves in actuality.

The imagination of the animal is, in some respects, a surer guide than human memory, as we have had occasion to remark before. The reaction to the concrete situation alone enables the animal to escape dangers more effectively than if it depended upon memory. Reflection acts more slowly; and the numerous ideas it would bring to mind in the form of symbols would only confuse and bewilder the animal,—as it often does us. Then, too, the ideas recalled with the help of signs would be partial; whereas imagination reinstates the past completely, in all its vividness, and so proves a more powerful stimulus to action. As an evidence of this superiority of

²⁵ *Essai*, pp. 55-57.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

imagination, Condillac mentions our constant avoidance of dangers, our escape from the wheels of vehicles on crowded streets, without conscious effort. All this may be done absent-mindedly — in a way comparable to all of an animal's activities. This phenomenon alone, says Condillac, the production in certain situations of the appropriate action because of its successful occurrence in the past, is what makes animals seem intelligent. It can hardly be doubted that in this distinction between the functioning of the past in an animal's present behavior, and the same phenomenon in man in its verbalized form, he has really made an extremely significant contribution to psychology. We may not agree in calling these phenomena 'imagination' and 'memory' respectively, but whether we call them by these names, or designate them as reflex and voluntary or purposive action, the thing described is the same.

Having dismissed the language of Adam and Eve as a subject outside his enquiry, Condillac turns his attention to an investigation of the way in which language might have arisen without divine interference. To illustrate this development, he imagines a boy and a girl, who, early in their infancy, long before they have learned to speak, become cut off from human society and are obliged to develop their own means of communication. If these children lived separately they would never develop a language, and they would be like the lower animals, limited to imagination, random and uncontrolled. Their actions would all be on the instinctive level.²⁷ But living together, as they do, they come to see in each other's behavior a kind of correlation between certain movements and obvious desires. These movements then become signs, whereby they can infer their desires and reciprocally render aid.²⁸ After communicating present feelings in a short time they reach the stage of communicating feelings that they have previously experienced; and their symbols have then passed definitely out of the class of natural signs, or accidental signs, and have become conventionalized.

²⁷ *Essai*, Part II, Section i, Chap. i, §1.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, §2.

Communication between these two will first take place through gestures, for it is by movements of the body that we most naturally express our needs. Every emotion has its proper accompanying bodily attitude, and these attitudes will be the first signs which our boy and girl will learn to read. In time this limited language will be supplemented by vocal signs formed upon the basis of natural cries. They will develop very slowly at first, because the organs of speech will be inflexible and difficult to control. In fact, sounds will never be produced in any great number by this original couple, for after a short time their muscles will grow stiff and unable to achieve anything new. Their child, however, will possess the flexible vocal apparatus of youth and will have the added advantage over his parents of being able to start with a few sounds which they cannot, and thus add to the vocabulary acquired from them. But his organs, too, will soon lose this facility and the production of new sounds will cease, only to be renewed in the next generation. New words will thus arise by chance with each generation, but for a long time the predominating mode of communication will be the language of action. The more words are acquired, the greater will be the exercise of the vocal organs and the longer their elasticity will be retained; so that gradually spoken language, the more economical and the more effective, will come to prevail.

Thus, language in its beginnings, was accidental and unconscious. Condillac, in emphasizing this fact, was denying the view, current in his day, of language as a deliberate invention of man. For him, it presupposed no native reason on the part of primitive man, no foresight of the great advantage to be gained, no calculation of means. It denoted certain superiorities over the other animals, to be sure, superiorities of physical construction, for the most part, but it brought with it incalculable advantages in coping with nature and infinite possibilities of intellectual growth.

From Warburton Condillac borrows a description of the

language of action,²⁹ or symbolical action, illustrated by examples from the Scriptures and from profane history. This form of language he imagines to have been very effective for instructing the people in religion and law. It was impressive and appealed to the imagination; and as time went on it became increasingly vivid and expressive of the more delicate shades of meaning. The subsequent development of this language took place along two lines. One was in the direction of the *danse des pas*, expressing chiefly joy and pleasure; in the other it remained primarily a means of conveying thought, and may be designated as the *danse des gestes*.³⁰ He finds that of all the modern peoples the Italians retain most of this original form of expression, the gesture language.

Spoken language, succeeding the language of action, retained many of its characteristics. Inflections of the voice took the place of the more pronounced movements of the body. The inflections were more marked at first, because the organs of speech were incapable of the finer gradations, and because, the number of words being small, it was necessary to use emphasis to distinguish meanings. Even at the present stage of development some vocal inflection is needed in every language; and the more unfamiliar the language, the greater the need we feel of this inflection in order to understand it.

Some of the natural inflections of the voice were found to be more pleasing than others and were repeated more often. The first intervals were thirds, fifths, and octaves, and by filling in the gaps between them in the most pleasing manner, the diatonic scale arose. At first musical notes were used only as an accompaniment of words, but by a gradual process of development they came to occupy a place of equal importance, and finally were cultivated for their own sake. Music and poetry, says Condillac, were born together. Perceiving the uniformities and regularities of accent in speech, men cultivated them and worked out the laws of versifica-

²⁹ Warburton, *Op. cit.*, §§8 and 9.

³⁰ *Essai*, Part ii, Section i, Chap. i, §§10-12.

tion.³¹ The common origin of the arts of music, poetry, pantomime, and dance accounts for their being combined by the ancients under a generic name. The first men, however, did not cultivate the arts for the sake of pleasure. These arts had a function to serve, and this function was religious. For this reason they were painstakingly learned, and it was thought to be very disgraceful to be ignorant of music or unskilled in the dance. Tradition and law were also conserved through this artistic medium; and so it was necessary for safety and convenience, as well as for social reputation, to be skilled in the arts.³²

The style of the early languages was highly figurative; but, as the language of action gave way to speech and words became more abundant, the use of similes and metaphors diminished and a more prosaic style was adopted. Even then, however, many writers continued to use the figurative style because of its greater imaginative appeal.³³ The first poetry was cryptic and esoteric. It made much use of understood or implied words, and there was much repetition and redundancy. Among some peoples, the Chinese, for instance, ~~prose~~ preserves the same ornateness as poetry. In general, however, the separation of the two left a middle ground where eloquence could be cultivated, a kind of discourse which could approach the one or the other, or mingle the two.

The more ancient peoples, not having the necessary language for close reasoning, found in the *story* the natural way of emphasizing a truth, or instructing in obedience and caution. From fables of men, beasts, and plants, these stories grew into parables with subtle allusions and implications,

³¹ The space which Condillac devotes to a description of Roman prosody seems quite out of proportion to its importance, and his criticism of Dacier and the Abbé du Bois is beside the main argument,—although a just enough criticism, on the whole. The reader must bear in mind, however, that the Latin language had to furnish the bulk of his illustrations, since he knew no other beside his own. It, too, had to furnish the historical evidence for his theory, since he regarded it as a more primitive form of speech than French.

³² Writing came in as a means of promulgating the laws, and gradually came to be extended to less consequential kinds of communication.

³³ *Essai*, Part II, Chap. i, §67.

from which the riddle finally emerged. Primitive man liked the obscure and the cryptic.³⁴

Picture-writing was the first type of written language to appear. This was of a very simple kind, in which a rough sketch stood for the object itself. The next stage was the hieroglyphic, where part of the idea represented the whole, *i. e.*, where one element of a situation stood for the total thing or event. By and by purely symbolic signs came into use, as the hieroglyphic symbol became more and more conventionalized and its original significance faded out. The use of symbolic marks was an expression of the desire, which operated also in the case of the riddle and the story, of making the thing mysterious and esoteric. Hieroglyphics also fostered the figurative style, and as the former became simplified, the style lost its picturesqueness, until, when the signs had become quite conventionalized, their rich connotations had entirely disappeared.³⁵

The objects which satisfied needs were not the first to be named when men began to attach spoken symbols to things. The ordinary things, the commonplaces of life, food and water, the sun and the earth, attracted no particular attention and required no particular mention. Those objects, however, which inspired fear or grief, the unexpected and the unusual, needed designation. Hence "the animals upon which primitive man waged war received names long before the fruits which nourished him."³⁶ The first words arose when men were obliged to agree upon the same perceptions. Consistent association of a definite sign with a particular object, action, or relation, by a number of people, is necessary for the establishment of a word.

The first words which came into existence were not the designations of simple ideas. The complex thing, the whole, is the most obvious, and only after analysis are its parts recognized as distinct units and denominated separately.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, Part II, Chap. i, §138.

³⁵ *Essai*, Part II, Chap. i, §§139-140.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, Part II, Section i, §81.

Thus the word 'tree' would have been used some time before the words signifying branches, leaves, green, etc., had come into existence. The words for mental operations were the last to arise, and their formation was very difficult, inasmuch as the situations in which they arose offered so little opportunity for comparison and agreement.

Although nouns seem to us the most obvious and necessary parts of speech, they were not the first to appear in the development of language, according to Condillac. Being accustomed to the language of action, men's first articulate substitutes for it were verbs expressing action or passion. Then followed the invention of nouns, then adjectives. At first the verbs were not conjugated; one form did service for all, and the context supplied person, number, and tense. The earliest sentence-order was probably object verb subject, the object first because this seemed the most natural way of fixing the attention of the listener upon the end of action. Thus the form "Fruit wishes Peter," would have preceded the order "Peter wishes fruit." This simple form was later rendered more exact by the addition of supplementary particles to denote the time of action, and the particle in time became incorporated into the verb itself as the tense ending.³⁷ The presence of irregular verb forms shows that language was built up very gradually and illogically; otherwise it would have been simpler to have constructed all of these forms on the same model. The declensions arose in the same way as the conjugations, by adding distinguishing or qualifying words which later became consolidated with the word modified.

Just as the most general notions came from ideas which are derived immediately from sense, so the most abstract terms came from the first names which were given to sensible objects. Gradually, by relating new objects to those already known, by classifying the new in terms of the old, we arrive at abstract and general terms. But as soon as usage has rendered the words familiar, their origin is forgotten, and men fall into the error of thinking that they are

³⁷ *Essai*, II, §§88-90.

the natural names of spiritual things and that they express the true essence of things. The words with which we describe psychological states and functions are metaphors borrowed from nature. "The imagination labors to find in objects which impinge upon the senses, images of what passes within its soul."³⁸ Having perceived movement and repose in matter, vibrations in the air, development in plants, it is natural to transfer the terms to operations which show a certain similarity.³⁹

Different races have developed their language along different lines, but the origin is in all cases similar. The Chinese, for example, have retained the vocal inflections which other races have so nearly outgrown, and have made them a vital part of their language. They have three hundred and twenty-eight monosyllables which are varied by means of five tones, thus making a total of 1640 signs. Other peoples found it easier to invent new signs, and inflection was reduced to a minimum. The character of a people will influence their language, and to understand a man perfectly when he speaks, we must know something about the kind of a man he is. Translation, therefore, involves an acquaintance with the people as well as the language translated, for the many connotations and accessory ideas attaching to words will differ among different peoples according to their laws, customs, etc.

We have observed before that Théry, one of Condillac's most sympathetic critics, objects to this theory of language as being too hypothetical.⁴⁰ Thus he naively remarks that Condillac, in passing over the teaching of religion, and trying to understand how men "*would have invented*" language, "throws himself in the route of hypothesis, which he has so constantly condemned in his writings, and loses himself in gratuitous suppositions." Not one word does Théry say regarding the importance of language as a developmental fac-

³⁸ *Essai*, II, p. 285.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, II, Section i, Chap. x, p. 103.

⁴⁰ Théry, *Notice sur Condillac*, vol. i (1823 edition), p. xx.

tor in human intelligence.⁴¹— the starting point of Condillac's inquiry and his motivating interest. His remarks are confined almost entirely to the historical aspect of the subject, the least important although perhaps the most entertaining part of Condillac's theory of language.

I have included this survey of Condillac's speculations upon the origin of conventionalized symbols, not because it is fundamental to his psychological theory as a whole, but because it seems unfair to omit what occupied so large a share of his thought, and because (a more important reason) it is illustrative of his historical attitude and scientific open-mindedness. Condillac had an important philosophical theory regarding language, the theory, namely, that arbitrary signs are necessary for all the higher mental operations, for memory, judgment, reason, purposive and rational thinking. Animals, he held, have no language, hence they have none of these higher functions of mind; they are creatures of imagination and unconscious impulses, unable to order their thoughts, and limited, therefore, to passing or reinstated sensations.

But, in Condillac's opinion there was a time when man had no means of communicating with others except those natural cries which all animals make and which are effective within their limitations. He differed from the animals, however, in having a superior physical organization, and certain needs which, for some reason that we do not know, made the development of some sort of language essential. Hence he developed a gesture language, having a natural predisposition to express emotion by means of bodily contortions. But with the discovery of the effectiveness of vocal signs, the gesture language was superseded, and remained only as certain forms of art — the pantomime and the dance — and in the vestigial vocal inflection of modern speech. Nor is Condillac's theory altogether unplausible that religious ceremonies bridged the

⁴¹ Th  ry says only that Condillac has recognized the importance of signs for the progress of thought, that he passes beyond Locke in this respect and shows all that reflection owes to language, and how the association of ideas could not take place without it. Th  ry, *Op. cit.*, xii.

gap between primitive times when gesture language was the natural mode of communication between men, and the later ages when speech had taken its place; for it is reasonable to suppose — though this too is conjecture — that religious observances would lag behind ordinary ones, and superstition would tend to express them in the ancient manner, and thus the old forms would be perpetuated, much as religion perpetuates obsolete grammatical forms in our own language.

A small stock of arbitrary symbols gave a tremendous impetus to human thought and more signs were invented. Thus it was an ever accelerating process, and with the growing consciousness of the utility of words, they began to be invented deliberately. As the supply of words increased, the need of supplementing them with gestures diminished, until only the vocal stress or inflection was left. In this unconscious development of language (and by far the greater part of its development has been unconscious) action words were the first to appear. In other words, primitive man had but one kind of words and those were expressive of some kind of action. When nouns entered, the verb remained as the most important word and preceded the subject in a statement of fact, though the object of action came to precede it.

The first words were imitative of the thing designated. Nor were the first things to be named the ordinary, commonplace objects of daily life, Condillac remarks with considerable perspicacity. These things remained nameless until sometime after the awful and the fearsome things which surrounded primitive man had received designations. The last words were the particles, the words expressing relations, prepositions and conjunctions, and the words for mental operations and moral qualities.

Thus Condillac continues to "throw himself in the way of hypothesis," but it must, I think, be admitted that in his "conjectures" he shows a keen psychological insight. It remains a great temptation even today to speculate fondly on the subject of primitive man, and, considering his century, Condillac shows remarkable self-control. His respect for

historical data, when it is obtainable, is boundless, and he has realized, as few of his age did, that to understand the present physiological or psychological function of animals, it is necessary to study their development and their earliest forms.

CHAPTER IV

COMPARATIVE PSYCHOLOGY

Condillac's treatment of the relation between the human and the animal mind represents one more revolt against the obscure. "We would hardly be curious to know what animals are," he announces in the preface to the *Traité des animaux*, "if it were not a means of knowing better what we are. It is from this point of view that conjectures upon such subjects are permissible." Thus he implicitly assumes that the mental operations of animals follow the same laws as do those of man, and that the study of one can shed light upon the others. Just as the Galilean dynamics found the same laws of motion in the celestial and the terrestrial domains, so Condillac finds the same mental laws operative in both man and beast. In intention, this completes the revolt against the mediaeval Aristotelian dichotomy of the universe.

Descartes, it will be remembered, had excluded the study of animals from the realm of psychology by denying them a soul and regarding them as automata. This was only an exaggeration of the old prejudice in favor of the unique rationality of man,—a prejudice strengthened by long centuries of rationalism and religious dogmatism, and not even wholly outgrown today. Théry, in his biographical *Notice sur Condillac*, expresses the opinion common even in his time,—almost seventy-five years after the treatise was written—toward an undertaking of this kind. "I can understand noble indignation of those who resent any comparison between animals and the king of nature."¹ He confesses himself repelled, however, by Descartés' alternative, and is

¹ *Oeuvres complètes de Condillac*, 1822 edition, vol. I, pp. 35-36.

unwilling to refuse all mental faculties to animals when he sees them exhibiting in ways similar to ours their joy and suffering, hope and fear, discernment, and, he is tempted to add, deliberation and choice. On the whole, he feels bound to admit a fundamental difference between human beings and brutes, since "Creatures that possess neither language, society, nor morality, cannot without utter absurdity be likened to the noblest of created beings." And so he disapproves of this project of Condillac's as hardly worthy of a philosopher; for the problem of the animal mind is "curious rather than important," insoluble, but scarcely worth serious consideration.²

An evolutionary point of view comes so natural to us now that it seems incredible that the fact of mental and social development in man should have been recognized, and origins sought as explanations of existing forms, without any suspicion of a continuous series of animal life. Condillac was not merely stating explicitly what was generally recognized when he said that the difference between man and the lower animals was one of degree, not of kind. The majority thought as Théry did that man's position in the world was that of a divinely appointed "king of nature," having nothing in common with beasts but a lower nature, consisting of sensations, appetites, and ignoble passions. But if, as Condillac believed, all mental operations are only sensations, differing only in intensity, order, and complexity; and if ideas of the good and the beautiful, have their origins, like the passions, in pleasure and pain; then any animal that has sensations has the germ of all these possibilities, and is prevented from realizing them only by some accident of bodily construction.³

Condillac's first object of attack is Descartes' theory of animals as automata. The theory is absurd but cannot be

² *Ibid.*, pp. 36 ff.

³ Cousin singles out this point for particular criticism: "L'erreur constante de Condillac et de l'école empirique est de croire que c'est à un accident extérieure que l'homme doit sa pensée, son activité, ses sentiments, tandis que c'est dans le fond même de sa nature qu'il puise incessamment la volonté, le sentiment, la pensée." Cousin, V., *Cours de l'histoire de la philosophie moderne*, vol. iii, pp. 20-24.

combatted in itself, for it is a consequence of a thorough-going mechanistic hypothesis and a rigorous deduction of results. The method of building systems upon logical definitions is to be condemned, rather than the individual doctrines; for the latter would be a laborious and never-ending process, and moreover, if one objects to the fundamental principle and the method of arriving at conclusions, it is useless to refute each separate point. Condillac would like to believe that God created animals devoid of feeling and thought. The belief would be soothing, but common observations contradict it. There are bodies in the world whose lack of feeling cannot be doubted. Of what use would sensation be to inorganic matter, which can move only when impelled from without? It gives no evidence of being subject to any laws but those of movement; and assumptions to the contrary are entirely gratuitous. Other bodies grow and assimilate nourishment, but are fixed to one spot. They seek nothing, they flee nothing; they merely vegetate. Certainly we should not be justified in ascribing mind to them, when they exhibit no evidence of it. "But animals seek their own preservation, they move at will, they take what is proper for them, reject the unfit, escape dangers. The same senses which rule our actions seem to rule theirs. Why should we say then that their eyes do not see, their ears do not hear, in short, that they do not feel?" I do not know absolutely that other men feel as I do, but their actions resemble mine, hence I assume that their sensations are somewhat like mine. "Would it suffice for a philosophical explanation to say that God is able to form automata which can do mechanically what I do intelligently?"⁴

The view of the ordinary man with regard to animals, says Condillac, is that they both feel and think. The scholastics taught that they feel but do not think. Buffon has tried to combine these views with the Cartesian doctrine, and holds that animals feel but do not think, and that their actions are

⁴ *Traité des animaux*, pp. 339 ff.

governed by purely mechanical laws.⁵ But Buffon, Condillac objects, has made of 'feeling' such a mechanical thing that actually he has not advanced beyond Descartes. In fact, if feeling (*sentir*) can be defined to include perception and comparison of perceptions, Buffon is not sure that an animal can be said even to have so much; and the meaning he is inclined to give the term ("disturbance" on the occasion of a shock or resistance") makes it applicable even to inorganic matter, — something which Buffon surely did not intend.

Buffon had tried to distinguish sensations as bodily and mental, the former belonging to the lower animals, the latter to man. 'Bodily sensations,' Condillac confesses, is a term quite beyond his comprehension. He is unable to distinguish within himself different degrees of corporeality in sensation, nor yet two distinct kinds. Where, he asks, would be the point of contact between the sentient self and the extended self, between the spiritual and the material *me*? The unity of the mind presupposes the unity of the sentient self: "a simple substance modified differently upon impressions made on different parts of the body."⁶ Buffon's theory would virtually imply the existence of two souls without any way of modifying each other. "To feel (*sentir*)," says Condillac, "signifies properly what is experienced when our organs are disturbed by the action of objects, and this impression precedes the operation of comparing." While the process is going on, before it is compared or analyzed, it is sensation. Therefore we must say that both man and the animals feel in the same sense of the word, or that the term is meaningless when applied to animals.

For Buffon, an animal's activity can always be described as instinct or appetite, the same response always following the same sense-stimulation. Thus he describes a dog, moved on the one hand by hunger and impelled to leap at his master's hand in which there is food, but on the other hand, restrained

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 358-359.

⁶ The word which Condillac (and Buffon) uses is *mouvement*.

⁷ *Traité des animaux*, p. 344.

by the nervous excitation due to blows received on a previous attempt to snatch food in this way. The dog remains in a state of equilibrium until his master flings him a piece, for until then he is the center of two opposing tendencies; but now that there is no counter impulse to abstain, he seizes the food. Condillac replies that if this is all that takes place in the dog, there is no pleasure, no pain, no sensation, nothing but a movement which might be described as a vibration of the matter of the internal sense giving rise to no ideas. But if the animal does not feel, he has no interest in seizing the prey or in refraining. Pleasure and pain are the only things that can counterbalance each other in the animal, and it is only in suspense when it compares the feelings that it experiences, and judges what it has to hope and fear. "Tout ce mécanisme de M. de Buffon n'explique donc rien; il suppose au contraire ce qu'il faut prouver."

The *Traité des animaux* was written expressly to refute the charge that he had plagiarized Buffon in the *Traité des sensations*.⁸ He declares in the preface that the imputation is false, and that a careful comparison of his work with that of his adversary will convince the careful reader of the utter disparity between them. He then devotes about a third of the *Traité* to pointing out these differences, and at the end of Part I he marshals thirty-one objections against Buffon. As a matter of fact he exaggerates their differences in an effort to exculpate himself, and he all but sacrifices some of his own favorite doctrines when they seem to resemble too closely those of Buffon. In this case, as in his controversy with Diderot, he is fighting a straw man, for the accusation was no more justified in this case than in the other, and was not seriously believed in by the majority. In any case, his

⁸ Buffon (in his *l'Histoire naturelle*) had proposed to account for the first impulses (*mouvements*), the first sensations and judgments of a man whose body and organs were perfectly formed, but who awakened to an unknown self and surrounding world. "Cet homme," Condillac remarks, "on verra plus souvent à la place de M. de Buffon, qu'on ne verra M. de Buffon à la sienne." His man notices, for example, that he does not know what he is, where he is, or where he came from. "Rather premature reflections," Condillac drily remarks. *Traité des animaux*, pp. 371 ff.

attacks upon Buffon excited more attention and unfavorable comment than the charge of plagiarism, and possibly harmed his reputation more at the time.⁹

Buffon had attempted to explain habit in neurological terms; so Condillac takes violent exceptions to the idea of nerve vibrations, as if he himself had not previously assumed "an activity of the brain" as the cause of perception,—though only an occasional cause, to be sure. He also very unfairly forces his own terminology upon Buffon. Thus when Buffon grants sensation and feeling (pleasure and pain) to animals, Condillac on the basis of his own sensationalism, argues that Buffon has admitted also all of those operations which flow from sensation or are its transformations.¹⁰ On his own analysis, animals have sensation, perception, feeling and imagination, but not memory and the higher faculties which are engendered by language, and according to his criti-

⁹ We read in the *Correspondance littéraire par Grimm, Diderot, etc.*, under the date of November, 1755: "On disait dans le temps du *Traité des sensations* que M. l'abbé de Condillac avait noyé la statue de M. de Buffon dans un tonneau d'eau froide. Cette critique, et le peu de succès de l'ouvrage, ont aigri notre auteur et blessé son orgueil; il vient de faire un ouvrage tout entier contre M. De Buffon, qu'il a intitulé *Traité des animaux*. L'illustre auteur de l'*Histoire Naturelle* y est traité durement, impoliment, sans égards, et sans ménagements. Quand il serait vrai que M. de Buffon se soit peu gêné sur le *Traité des Sensations*, et qu'il en eût dit beaucoup de mal dans le monde, la conduite de M. l'abbé de Condillac n'en serait pas moins inexcusable. . . . M. l'abbé de Condillac devrait savoir que, quand on manque d'égards aux autres, et surtout à des gens considérés, on ne fait pas le moindre tort à ceux à qui l'on manque, mais on se dégrade soi-même." Vol. III, p. 112. Théry, too, thinks that this choler was unworthy a philosopher. He says: "J'ai dit que le dessein de répondre à une calomnie était ce qui avait dicté à Condillac son *Traité des animaux*. La vengeance était légitime, il n'aurait pas du peut-être l'exercer avec hauteur. L'ironie mordante, le sarcasme insultant et amer viennent trop souvent se mêler à ses graves observations. Ce n'est pas que la satire ne soit partout vive et ingénieuse; mais plus de calme eût convenu à l'écrivain qui voulait défendre la vérité." *Oeuvres de Condillac*, vol. I, p. xxxviii.

¹⁰ Condillac quotes Buffon as saying that by "repeated acts, animals have joined to the impression of the sense of vision, those of taste, odor, and touch." This is equivalent to saying that they make comparisons and reach judgments, for the word 'join' signifies nothing here if not the same thing as to compare and judge. *Traité des animaux*, p. 360.

cism of Buffon, he, too, has implicitly admitted all the faculties which flow from sensation.

The man whom Buffon imagines suddenly endowed with sense, opens his eyes and looks about him. He sees light, the sky, the green grass, the crystal waters, all as a part of himself. But says Condillac, if it is *sky, grass, and water* that he sees, then they are not seen as part of himself. All that he would see would be a confusion of light and color. Again, according to Buffon, the man turns his eyes toward the rays of light. This operation of turning the eyes, Condillac objects, presupposes a perception of outer space, otherwise why move the eyes one way rather than another? And yet, in discussing vision in the *Traité des sensations*, he had himself assumed that his statue, when it had only the sense of vision, and as yet no perception of externality, could move its eyes from one object to another, or from one portion of a colored surface to another, and thus distinguish colors; and the only reason he gives for its moving its eyes is that they become fatigued from prolonged sensation of one kind.

It is unnecessary to follow out Condillac's criticism of Buffon's hypothetical man. The device is essentially falsifying; and although Condillac is more wary of the pitfalls and on the whole does better with his analysis, we grow weary of his continued reviling of the kettle's color. His criticism of Buffon's theory of vision is interesting, however, as showing a further development of his own doctrine. Buffon had thought that the new-born child sees everything inverted and double, and that experience is necessary to correct this error. Condillac objects that he has made the eye do the seeing, when he infers that because the retinal image is inverted, we must originally see things in this position. There is, properly speaking, no image anywhere, says Condillac. On Buffon's own principles there is only a nerve vibration; but this movement of matter is neither form nor color—it can only be the occasional cause of a modification of mind. "No matter if the physical cause of the sensation is double, no matter if the rays act in a reverse order to the position of objects: this is not a reason for believing that there is in the mind a

double or inverted sensation; it can have only one manner of being, which in itself is not susceptible of situation at all.”¹¹ The man of Cheselden said nothing about seeing things upside down. To be sure, we may occasionally see things double; but this happens after we have formed the habit, with the help of touch, of directing our two eyes upon the same object and interpreting the sensation as one object. But if something prevents the rays from coming to a focus in the ordinary way, they fall in different places. Then we continue to see the same object, because both eyes have formed the habit of referring their sensations to the same object; but we see it double, because they cannot refer it to the same spot.

The *Traité des animaux* follows the spirit of the work on sensations. Here, however, Condillac has brought in many of his earlier observations on language, which had been so conspicuously absent in the *Traité des sensations*; but he still fails to make the most of them and is content for the most part to show to what extent the faculties of man act in the lower animals, assuming the faculties to be merely transformations of sensation. Animals have to conserve themselves, to move at will, to approach the beneficial and flee the injurious, in short, to exhibit much of the behavior of men. Why, then, asks Condillac, do we conclude that they are activated by different causes and move according to different laws? It is commonly said that animals are limited to instinct; but what degree of consciousness accompanies instinct and how does this activity differ in animals and man? These are the subjects which he proposes to discuss, with a view to showing that the intelligence of animals is of the same nature fundamentally as that of man, but a much lower degree, because of the animal's lack of language and fewer needs.

Instinct he regards as only habit without reflection.¹² The degree of consciousness involved will vary for different species and for individuals within the species. Man differs from animals in the greater variety and flexibility of his habits.

¹¹ *Traité des animaux*, p. 367.

¹² *Traité des animaux*, p. 415.

He can adjust himself to new situations more easily and acquire a greater number of such adjustments. But in addition to instinct, man has the power of reflection. It is habit which directs his lower activities—those pertaining to the preservation of the body—while reason is occupied with other ends. The two “selves” in man usually act together, habit being occupied with making the necessary bodily adjustments to present stimuli, reflection pursuing a train of thought unrelated to the accompanying action. All habits are, in their origin, reflective; and whenever a new situation presents itself, or when an element in the old stimulus to an habitual action is altered, reflection occurs. This view is familiar to us as the “lapsed-intelligence” theory, which regards thought as essentially problem-solving, and as arising from a hindrance to habitual action. It conflicts, however, with a principle set forth in the *Traité des sensations*, and referred to in a preceding chapter as of considerable importance. “I have remarked several times,” says Condillac, “particularly in my *Logic*, that a thing is never done designedly which has not before been done unintentionally. This is a fruitful truth.” Thus everything in us is first done by nature. It teaches the infant to know its body as a part of itself, to recognize its sensations as modifications of its sense-organs. But how it does these things we do not know, nor shall we ever know until we discover perfectly the nature of the soul and the mechanism of the human body.¹³

Animals have fewer needs than men; hence their habits are fewer and more fixed. Communication of ideas between men creates complex social and personal needs, and the great variety of forms which these needs assume necessitates the development of a vast number of habits. In both cases, how-

¹³ A passage in the *Traité des sensations* (p. 397) on learning in animals seems to bear out this theory of the natural and effortless or involuntary formation of habits. The animal, not knowing at first how to satisfy his needs, must experiment and try everything. Play is nature's way of teaching him. He is entirely occupied with seeking pleasure and avoiding pain. Thus without conscious effort he accumulates experiences which gradually become associated into a system. A reconciliation of these two contradictory theories rests upon an adequate theory of instinct, a notion that was foreign to Condillac.

ever, whether the responses be simple habitual actions or involve complex trains of reasoning, they are simply satisfactions of needs. Animal instinct is only practical, that is, it is concerned only with what is good for the animal physically. Ours is both practical and theoretic. By instinct (habit without reflection) man can judge both the true and the beautiful; but this sort of discernment presupposes language, hence brutes do not have it.¹⁴

The acquisition of *theoretical habits* Condillac explains in the following way: "By repeating the judgments of those who have charge of our education, or by reflecting for ourselves upon the knowledge we have acquired, we contract such a strong habit of grasping the relations of things that we sometimes have a presentiment of the truth before we comprehend the demonstration. We may be said to discern it by instinct."¹⁵ Thus Condillac disposes of those perceptions or judgments of aesthetic values which were commonly explained as the work of a moral or aesthetic sense. A perception of relations which even Locke had ascribed to intuition is thus taken out of the class of supernatural and inexplicable acts of pure reason and put in the same category with naturally acquired habits. Neither taste nor talent are inherited except in so far as we are born with greater or less capacity for learning to feel. Appreciation of art comes with instruction alone.¹⁶

The absence of language reduces an animal's mental activity in numberless ways. For one thing, as Condillac points out, their discoveries cannot be handed down from one generation to another.¹⁷ They are in so far comparable to a man living in a state of solitude. They have intelligence, but it is like that of a man cut off entirely from all contact with his fellows. They live with others of their kind, to be sure,

¹⁴ In recognizing language as the basis of distinction between the two kinds of habit, Condillac undoubtedly shows a remarkable degree of perspicacity. But just what part language plays in the formation of the theoretical habit, he does not make clear.

¹⁵ *Traité des animaux*, pp. 116-118.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 421.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 400.

but there is no interchange of ideas. Each one seeks to satisfy his own needs regardless of others; there is no reciprocity, no imitation. They do have a certain language of action, limited to the expression of a very few ideas; and Condillac offers no very satisfactory explanation of why they have never developed a more extensive one. At one time he says they have fewer needs and therefore less use for signs. At another he remarks that their vocal organs are not adapted for the articulation of sounds. The failure of animals to learn the language of man concerns him more than the question as to why they develop no language of their own. The parrot can articulate a few words, but we could not expect him to have any ideas comparable to ours annexed to them. To understand and use our language, it would be necessary for animals to have the same needs and the same internal and external organization. But there is little in common between man and any of the lower animals in physical endowment or natural needs; hence there could be but scant resemblance in their modes of communication.

Certain of the domestic animals, however, especially those that are much in the company of people, become very clever in responding to signs. They are dependent upon man for so many of their necessities of life that it behooves them to learn to interpret his movements and calls. Here Condillac resorts to a quaint explanation of the manner in which the animal learns to understand us when we speak. When a sign — an action — accompanies our spoken word, and when the action is such as the animal would make under similar circumstances, he associates the spoken word with the action which he understands, and thus after a time learns to respond to the word alone.¹⁸

In examining Condillac's theory of memory we observe that he makes this faculty dependent upon language, and thereby denies it to animals. The past figures in the present experience of an animal only as the total recall of a perception, that is, imagination. When two or more sensations have

¹⁸ *Traité des animaux*, p. 408.

been included in the same act of attention, the subsequent occurrence of one will tend to arouse the others. Thus a stimulus to which an animal has reacted in the past, will, upon its subsequent presentation, be reacted to in the same way, other conditions being the same. By means of association, therefore, a habit may be established; and the habits formed in this way by an animal are often so numerous and complex that they seem to denote a high degree of intelligence. If an animal has at some time found food in a certain place, he will seek out that spot when his hunger recurs, simply because, as Condillac explains, the feeling of hunger is associated with the perception of the food and the place in which it was found. Likewise animals flee from enemies because at some time they have seen others of their species devoured, whose cries of agony have caused a feeling of pain, and when the enemy is again seen, this feeling reappears and initiates flight. Or perhaps the mother on some such occasion has communicated her feelings to her offspring by her cries of terror. The animal need have no idea of the danger which menaces it. The cry simply arouses the idea of something painful and an immediate tendency to flee.¹⁹

This may sound like strange doctrine from a philosopher who professed to be so repelled by the mechanism of Buffon. Except for the recurrence of the words 'idea' and 'pleasure and pain,' his account of animal behavior would fit very nicely the modern conception of the "conditioned reflex." It will be remembered, however, that this very idea of pleasure and pain as determinants of animal habit formation forms a vital part of his doctrine, and is the point which he brings up in opposition to the theory of Buffon.

"It is not astonishing," concludes Condillac, "that man, who is superior to the animals in bodily organization as well

¹⁹ "Je suppose, donc, un animal qui se voit, pour la première fois, menacé de la chute d'un corps, et je dis qu'il ne songera pas à l'éviter car il ignore qu'il en puisse être blessé; mais, s'il en est frappé, l'idée de la douleur se lie aussitôt à celle de tout corps prêt à tomber sur lui; l'une ne se réveille plus sans l'autre, et la réflexion lui apprend bientôt comment il doit se mouvoir pour se garantir de ces sortes d'accidents." *Traité des animaux*, pp. 392-393.

as in the spirit which animates him, alone has the gift of speech; but because animals do not have this advantage, must we regard them as automata, or creatures of sense but deprived of any kind of intelligence? No, certainly not."²⁰ It would perhaps have been more consistent with his principles had he allowed man's superiority to rest upon his "organization" alone, without bringing in a hitherto unmentioned "spirit which animates him." And yet it is thoroughly in harmony with his positivism to admit the existence of "essential" differences, even though the comprehension of them lies beyond the possible domain of human knowledge. Thus he writes: "Unable as we are to know the essential nature of things, we can judge them only by their operations. Hence it would be vain for us to try to assign to each one its limits: we will never see any distinction between them except one of degree. It is thus that man seems to differ from the angel, and the angel from God himself; but from the angel to God the distance is infinite, while from man to the angel it is very considerable, and doubtless greater from man to beast. But it is not in the constitutive principle which makes each of these what it is, but only in their actions that they differ as more to less; and from this very fact [of their seeming difference in degree] we must infer that they differ in their essence. That which has less, surely does not have within his nature the possibility of having more. The brute does not have within his nature the possibility of becoming man, just as the angel has not in his nature the possibility of becoming God . . ."²¹ There are those, however, who are afraid that in granting sensation and

²⁰ *Traité des animaux*, p. 409.

²¹ Condillac probably uses this reference to unknowable essences to excuse himself to the Church. Since he concedes, and even asserts, an essential (though incomprehensible) difference between the human and brute souls, he is free to compare human and brute *behavior* in a scientific way, without being constrained by religious prejudices, and to find in them only differences of degree which do not detract from the instructiveness of the comparison. In a closely similar way, Kant admits that man as science can know him, is a mere cog in the vast machine of nature; but he nevertheless insists that man, as a thing-in-itself, may well be as free as his conscience bids him assume that he is.

intelligence to animals we are confusing them with men, although they cannot deny to animals either the organs which are the chief mechanism of sensation, nor the actions which are their effects. These people are like children in the dark, frightened by the phantoms conjured up by their imaginations." ²²

One outcome of Condillac's comparative method is a naturalistic attitude with respect to the origin of the fundamental conceptions of religion and morals. Since animals form few abstractions, they have few general ideas.²³ They are entirely occupied with satisfying their ever-pressing physical needs, and nothing leads them to reflect or to compare themselves with the rest of nature. Man, on the contrary, by virtue of his observations and generalizations, has arrived at a knowledge of God and of moral truths.²⁴ The idea of God is not innate, nor is it immediately given as some philosophers have thought. We come to it *by degrees*; and polytheism is only one stage in the development of an idea of a being who is "first cause, independent, one, infinite, eternal, omnipotent, unchangeable, intelligent, free, and whose providence extends to all." The feeling of helplessness, of inferiority to an external cause of pleasure and pain, and later the intellectual necessity of finding a first cause, leads

²² *Traité des animaux*, p. 411. Cf. also *ibid.*, p. 443: "Notre âme n'est donc pas de la même nature que celle des bêtes."

²³ In the *Essai* Condillac criticises Locke, who had attributed to animals a power of reasoning upon particular ideas, but had denied them such ability where general or abstract ideas are concerned. "If Locke had understood the significance of conventional signs," he says, "he would have known that animals, not having them, have absolutely no reason." He himself seems to forget this insistence upon the necessity of language for the higher processes of thought, when, in the *Art de penser*, he remarks that Locke had thought abstract ideas to be impossible for animals, but that he was wrong in so thinking. They do have such ideas, for it is necessary only to have senses, in order to abstract; but without words to designate them they do not result in further knowledge. *Essai*, p. 157 (footnote). *Art de penser*, p. 73. *Traité des animaux*, p. 422.

²⁴ Chap. IV of the *Traité des animaux*, which treats of this subject, is taken almost entirely from a dissertation written by Condillac several years before and published anonymously in the Proceedings of the Academy of Berlin.

man to form an idea of a being or beings who have the power which he lacks, and are intelligent and free.

In the same way moral ideas arise at a certain stage of man's social development. He comes to see that the best way of gaining pleasure and attaining his ends is by helping his fellows to attain theirs. The result is that they agree upon certain forms of conduct; and these conventions are so many moral laws to which their actions must conform. Without the idea of a God man might think that these laws were of his own making; but, having an idea of an all-powerful being, just and wise, he recognizes in him a legislator whose edicts are written in human nature. "The laws that reason prescribe are, then, only the laws that God himself has imposed upon man; and in conforming to the dictates of reason we achieve morality of action."²⁵ God is the author of the law, and we merely discover it by the exercise of our faculties. But we must not confuse the means of knowing it with the source from which it springs. It was in God before he created man; and he made man in conformity with it. By not giving to animals the faculties necessary for the perception of moral truth, God has indicated clearly that He imposes no obligations upon them. They are incapable of moral action; hence they have no claim on divine justice, and their souls are mortal. This does not mean, however, that their souls are material. They might, indeed, continue to exist after the dissolution of the body; it is only that God has willed otherwise.

Someone will probably object, says Condillac, that it is not consistent with divine justice that animals should be condemned to suffer pains like ours without any prospect of future reward. But suffering is part of the law of their construction, designed to protect them from dangers; and without it, with only pleasure for a guide, their lives would be speedily terminated. Pain is the inevitable consequence of certain physical laws, and God cannot change it for their sake.

²⁵ *Traité des animaux.*

Although animals share with man the primitive feelings of pleasure and pain, out of which the emotions develop, it is obvious that without human reflection, discernment, taste and invention, and the numerous needs of man, they can have only a few emotions comparable to ours.²⁶ Self-love is a passion which they share with man, but in them it is expressed only in the effort to avoid pain or discomfort. They cannot be actuated by the desire of self preservation, for a being which has no idea of life or death has not, properly speaking, a desire to live. In man this desire need not, in fact it rarely does, take the form of a direct desire of avoiding death. It is susceptible of as many variations as life affords; it may be gross or subtle, but it is only a form, a further development of a native self-love. The complexity of human society makes possible a variety of emotions which the lower animal could never know; and the added quality of moral tone which attaches to them in man gives them an altogether distinct quality. In brutes the passion is only an instinct which has for its objects physical goods and evils. The activity of their minds is spasmodic, aroused only by the impressions of objects upon the sense, ceasing with the impression and giving place to a kind of lethargy. Their apparent hope, fear, love, hate, anger, chagrin, sadness, are habits which make them act without reflection. They are aroused only by objects which cause pain or pleasure.

Man, on the contrary, has within himself a principle of activity, which can reflect and desire even when his body needs nothing and when no external object is acting upon him. The mere activity of any faculty gives him pleasure. Thus "One sees how a single desire, that of escaping pain, gives rise to the passions in all creatures capable of feeling, how the impulses which we have in common with the beasts, and which appear in them as the result of a blind instinct, are transformed in us into vices or virtues; and how our superiority in the way of intelligence renders us superior on the side of the passions."²⁷

²⁶ *Art de penser*, p. 444.

²⁷ *Traité des animaux*, p. 451.

The lower animals, then, have in common with man a faculty of feeling (sensing), of which all the other faculties are only transformations. The degree of intelligence which they possess we commonly call *instinct*, and the higher degree attained by man, *reason*. Need guides the successive transformations of the primary faculty; and, by virtue of the pleasure or pain which attends its activity, ideas become associated into systems which can be recalled upon occasion. In man the recall is voluntary and purposive, being guided by language; whereas in animals it is the caprice of each passing sensation. Pleasures and pains become infinitely diversified in man, by reason of his wider needs; they become intellectual as well as physical, and capable of dominating the more primitive needs in accordance with a moral law which is part of man's nature. Language, as a means of social intercourse, makes progress possible, for each new generation may begin where the preceding one left off. But the lower animals do not have anything comparable to tradition, and each one knows only what he alone can learn accidentally in the course of his own existence. They have no appreciation of the good or the beautiful, for it is by the possession of speech alone that ethical and artistic taste has emerged in the human species along with the sciences and religion.

But although man's knowledge is incomparably more extended than that of the lower animals, "he forms," says Condillac, "part of that general system which includes all animate beings, the general system in which all the faculties arise from the same source, sensation; in which they are engendered by the same principle, need; in which they all operate by the same law, the association of ideas. Sensation, need, association of ideas; that is the system to which we must refer all the behavior of animals. And, even though some of these truths have been previously recognized, no one had hitherto brought them together or grasped them in their totality."²⁸

²⁸ *Traité des animaux*, p. 471.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS — THE METHOD OF SCIENCE

In the background of all of Condillac's philosophical speculations, coming to the fore now and again as explicit doctrine, is his ardent belief in the efficacy of a certain methodological procedure. Like Descartes and Bacon, he was convinced that the salvation of philosophy lay, not in the reform of particular theories, but in the adoption of a method that would eliminate error in speculation, and put it on the sure road to unlimited discovery. He shared with his two famous predecessors their superb faith in the power of the human mind to throw off its bad habits of thinking, and by a rigorous discipline create itself anew, shorn of all its old prejudices and the accumulated error of centuries. But it was not induction that constituted this panacea for philosophical ills, nor yet the establishment of a rigorous criterion of truth, clearness, and distinctness. What he looked to for the deliverance of philosophy was *analysis*, based upon the clear and univocal definition of terms, and a strictly logical deduction.

Doubtless it will seem incomprehensible to many that a philosopher who was so undeniably empirical in his teachings, who denounced so vigorously the logical construction of ponderous metaphysical systems upon a few arbitrarily defined axioms, and who labored to show that reason, though it marks the culmination of intelligence, has no claim to supernatural powers of creation, should so far forsake his own principles as to outline a method based upon logic and advocating a symbolic form of expression comparable to that of mathematics. Superficially the two points of view seem irreconcilable. A closer examination, however, will show that there is no real incompatibility between Condillac's empiricism and the particular form of rationalism which he fosters. Neither his emphasis upon the analytical function of reason, nor his insistence upon strict terminology is out of

harmony with his fundamental thesis that all knowledge comes from sensational experience.

In dealing with an eighteenth century philosopher it is unsafe to apply the term 'empiricist' or 'rationalist' without important reservations. An antagonism between these two tendencies could hardly be said to exist at that time, and they rather worked together in the same cause. It was not against rationalism in its present connotations that Condillac inveighed, and we can hardly expect him to share all of our prejudices against it. To be sure, he was attacking the chief rationalists of his day, but it was not their faith in the validity of reason as such, that he condemned, but the way in which they used this reason to deduce from a few assumed truths the whole system of nature, without reference to observed facts or to the clear evidence of sense perception. It was not so much their use of reason as their reliance upon mere reason, that he denounced as their fundamental error. Condillac himself knew no method but reason for the deduction of truth, but as for the materials of knowledge, that was quite another matter. Here is where observation and experiment enter, and the whole gist of his argument, the central point of his empiricism, is that the facts of experience alone, properly demoninated and expressed in logical sequence, lead infallibly to truth. For him, certainly, there is no other source of knowledge, neither intuition, nor inspiration, nor subconscious illumination.

The essence of analysis lies in the possession of a strict and definite terminology, for "science is nothing more than a language well made." All higher mental processes, it will be remembered, depend, in Condillac's scheme, upon the use of language. It is by means of words that we remember, that we judge, that we reason. Obviously, then, our thinking depends directly upon our vocabularies, and in proportion as they are full and definite, we reason well. The laws of logic are comparatively simple: it is not here that we go astray. But in using vague and equivocal terms, signs which have no definite ideas attached to them, we end in shadowy

generalizations, if not in utterly erroneous conclusions. The first step in philosophical reform, therefore, is the construction of a new terminology in which the words or symbols are as exact and univocal as those of mathematics. With the use of such a language, we will be able to express everything in its simplest terms, its bare formulae, and this, of course, is precisely what science aims to do.

Behind the existing confusion in philosophical speculation Condillac sees a corrupt language. From Bacon to Hume, philosophers had been denouncing the use of hypostatized abstractions, of vague expressions loaded with emotional connotation, of vulgar phrases for the designation of philosophical ideas.¹ They warned men against such dangers, and advised specific reforms. But the evil, for Condillac, cannot be remedied in this way. As Descartes made a clean sweep of our knowledge to reconstruct it on rational principles, so Condillac would remake the whole philosophical vocabulary, building it up on scientific principles by the method of analysis.²

At the root of all our errors of thinking lies the same verbal defect. This is the necessity we are under of using words before determining their significance, or ever so much as having felt the need of determining it. Thus we learn popular prejudices and superstitions along with our mother tongue, and we never get away from them as long as we use that language. Our entire fund of knowledge is corrupted from the beginning, for long before we have critical intelligence, we mimic words, parrot-like, forming peculiar associations with them or no associations at all.³ Then when we grow older we cling to these ideas acquired in youth, and even fall into the habit of regarding the old familiar modes of thought

¹ Cf. Bacon, particularly in his conception of the Idols of the Market Place. *Novum Organum*, Book I, §§ 59, 60.

² It will be observed that although Condillac advocated a new philosophical vocabulary, and thought that philosophy could never arrive at any real discovery without it, he himself wrote fifteen volumes of philosophy in the usual terminology,—just as Descartes was obliged to employ in his demonstrations the very concepts which he doubted. Neither philosopher found it easy to lift himself by his own latches.

³ *Art de penser*, p. 55.

as the most authoritative, and of thinking we know a thing if we know the word for it.

The necessity of using words in a metaphorical sense and the tendency to hypostatize abstractions are two other sources of confusion in language. To be sure, it is almost impossible to avoid carrying over into abstract thought the language of every-day discourse, and using the same words to signify analogous ideas; but too often an appreciation of the figure becomes lost in the course of time, and the word comes to be accepted literally, thus giving rise to absurd misconceptions. "When philosophers wish to explain something, they look for something in common experience that bears a relation to it, they make comparisons, they seize upon a metaphorical expression, and thus systems are built."⁴ Thus nothing could be more ambiguous, says Condillac, than the language we use to describe our sensations. The word 'sweet,' for example, brings up no precise idea. A thing may be sweet in any number of ways; sweet to sight, to taste, to smell, to hearing, to the mind, to the heart, to the imagination. In any of these cases, the word is used with such different meanings that we cannot judge one by the other.

Because our earliest ideas are of particular things, and are closely bound up with the notion of their objective reality, this association persists for all those general ideas which come later and have no corresponding objectivity. Thus we are led to imagine entities in the outer world which are the counterparts of these names, and as a result, such false conceptions arise as those of faculties of the mind (such as the will, the judgment, etc.), which are imagined to be real entities, commanding, obeying, and executing the actions of intelligent beings. In all of these various ways "the abuse of words has stood for the art of reasoning."⁵

For the requirements of ordinary usage our speech is consistent enough, and Condillac has no desire to extend his reform of language into this field. So long as we conform in

⁴ *Traité des systèmes*, pp. 42-43.

⁵ *Logique*, p. 395.

our behavior to what is expected of us, reacting as other people do to common terms, there is no need to check up our agreement on their precise significance. Indeed, the necessity of living with others and depending upon the same kind of things for the satisfaction of our needs, compels an agreement which is quite good enough for ordinary purposes. Our sensations may differ ever so much from each other; but there is an approximate uniformity of action in response to symbols, which serves our needs in practical life as well as a more precise one would. These same terms which function so well in the lower walks of life, however, are entirely unsuited to the purposes of philosophy. Here approximate uniformity is not enough. If reasoning is ever to achieve results and be anything more than a ceaseless wrangling over words, it must adopt a new language,—one that is free from the vulgar connotations and equivocations.

The change will not be an easy one, Condillac agrees, but it is possible. We have, implanted in our natures, the means of reorganizing speech if only we have the strength and persistence to change our mental habits. Language is a mental habit, and has all the disadvantages—as well as the advantages—of physical habits. For mental habits, like those of the body, are firmly entrenched, and protected from doubt and examination. The mind is loth to see its own defects and too lazy to reflect upon itself;⁶ some are ashamed not to think exactly like everyone else, and others are too indolent to think for themselves. Habits of mind must be rendered independent of the fickle control of social custom; we must break away from the traditional terminology and construct a new method modeled after the method of Nature, for she is the great teacher of logic, of that analysis by which all science has been created.

Reason is not a faculty which springs up fully developed in the minds of men. We have only to look to the so-called lower faculties to see it in its beginnings; and the way in which it operates, and the function it performs is the same whether

⁶ *Logique*, p. 396.

the faculty be crude and primitive or highly sophisticated. It has its incentive, as do all the faculties of mind, in *need*. Thus need and the desire which springs from it are the motive forces behind all of our researches, whatever their nature may be. There is a constant interaction between man and his environment.⁷ He is modified by it and in turn adapts it to his needs; and the power of reasoning is only one of the many adaptations resulting from this interplay.

Need and desire, however, depend for their force upon pleasure and pain, and without these native modes of feeling we would acquire nothing, either in the way of physical habit or of that knowledge which is essential to our welfare at a higher stage of our development. Pleasure and pain are our first masters, and the efficacy of their teaching is shown in the rapidity with which infants learn.⁸ This, says Condillac, is the plan of Nature's instruction, and it operates as a perfectly adjusted and interrelated system of forces. The same thing which creates a need can satisfy it. Between the external and the internal orders, between the physical world and our bodily needs, between outer forces and inner faculties, we find a perfectly coordinated system of relations. Knowledge is acquired in the order in which needs arise; for man learns just so much as he needs to know, and the more pressing is his need the more docile he is to his lessons.

Nature, in teaching us to escape destruction and to seek the useful, is the perfect teacher of logic. If our first efforts to satisfy needs are successful, these acts are repeated and in time become habitual. If they are not successful, they are promptly eliminated from our stock of reactions. In this way Nature obliges us to correct our judgments when they are false. Thus, for Condillac, the test of truth is the *pragmatic criterion*: a true judgment is an adaptation of means to end, the successful accomplishment of a purpose. Knowledge for him, as for the pragmatist of today, is an instrument. It is the outcome of a natural development in

⁷ *Logique*, p. 391.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 432.

response to definite needs, for the purpose of a more efficient dealing with Nature.

Reason, then,—that great creative force upon which vast metaphysical systems have been reared—is only one of the ways in which the mind deals with its data, in which it reacts to its environment. It differs from the simpler forms of reaction in that it deals with the world through the intermediation of words. It is absolutely essential, therefore, that words be true representatives of experience, that each one have its precise denotation and no other. This means that every element of experience must have its own symbol, for reason consists of the working over and arranging of these parts through their verbal correlates. This brings us to the crux of Condillac's theory of the scientific method: *analysis*. By analysis we perceive the discrete elements of experience given by observation; we name them, and presto, the work of the reason is practically done. Thus "science is nothing more than a language well made."

Analysis in its beginnings was unreflective, just as was the language which resulted. It was a habit with men long before they became aware of it. "In a word, all that men have become, they were made first by nature only, and all that they have accomplished by their own efforts has been done by observing what Nature first made them do. She began everything, and always did it well. This is a truth which one cannot too often repeat."⁹ Language grew faster than analysis, however, and thus degenerated in accuracy, and thus, too, it has come about that we have in our minds more words than we have ideas. For as long as our stock of terms corresponds accurately to our fund of ideas, our reasoning is exact, although it may be exceedingly limited in scope. If language had grown as it began,—new words being added as analysis revealed new ideas,—it would have remained exact; but men, not knowing that it was by analyzing that they made their discoveries, used this method less and less.

⁹ *Logique*, p. 409.

But, if Nature teaches us logic in this simple and effective manner, some will wonder why it is necessary for us to concern ourselves with studying it. We would not need to, Condillac replies, if we could always determine when we are following a precept of Nature and when we are merely perpetuating a superstition of man. Nowhere is Condillac more in the spirit of his time than in this sentimental attachment to the idea of Nature as the perfect and all-wise teacher. Thus we are told that in the beginning language suffered none of its present disabilities. It was limited in range, to be sure, but it compensated for this defect by its precision. Man invented words as he needed them, that it, as new ideas made them necessary; and his thinking was always clear and exact.¹⁰ This we see illustrated by children, who are by nature observers and analysts, and who have the possibility of remaining such. In fact they are obliged to do so as long as Nature is their only teacher. But when we take them in hand, we forbid observation and analysis and force principles of our own construction upon them. We suppose that they cannot reason, because we cannot reason with them; and we exert all our power to force them to follow our own opinions, prejudices and errors. If some of them show originality and achieve greatness, it is because they have enough energy to overcome the obstacles we place in their way.¹¹

We have already seen how Condillac traces the origin of language in primitive men, but in this part of the *Essai* we are not impressed, certainly, by the ideal character of this process. Indeed, we rather gained the impression that the growth of language was a somewhat accidental and haphazard affair, in which originally one sign had to do service for a number of ideas, and where exactness of denotation was about the last thing to be expected of a word. But though primitive man was sorely handicapped in his philosophizing he might have been a good analyst for all that. We can con-

¹⁰ *Essai*, p. 368.

¹¹ *Logique*, p. 400.

ceive how men, as he tells us, first by means of the language of action, and then by spoken symbols, have analyzed their environment, perceiving in ever increasing number the elements of things as more and more symbols make reflection upon nature possible. But if language is necessary for ideas, if we must have a symbol before we have an idea to express, then some part of language must be innate. Condillac prefers this hypothesis to the assumption of innate ideas, and rightly so. The admission that some element or factor in language is innate does not conflict with his theory in the least. He grants only that the form of our bodies furnishes the possibility of making signs, which first take the form of natural cries expressing emotion. Man gives vent to these cries with no thought of communicating an idea; and at this stage there is no analysis. Repeated observation and acting in response to signs makes possible the separating out of some element in the environment and recognizing it in distinction from the rest.

"Languages," Condillac concludes, "are only analytical methods, very defective ones as they exist today, but methods which were once exact and might be so again."¹² The sciences have partially succeeded in remodeling their terminology; but for the most part it is still made up of the vocabulary of popular usage mixed with a few foreign and barbarous terms which no one understands.¹³ Physics and chemistry are somewhat better than the others; but science in general is very little ahead of philosophy. "We speak these languages without saying anything; more often we speak them only to utter absurdities; and in general it seems that we do not speak for the purpose of being understood." All this may be changed, he tells us, if we look to mathematics as a model for a new philosophical method. In algebra a problem is solved by being translated into an appropriate terminology and reduced to increasingly simpler terms until the solution contained in the given conditions becomes clear

¹² *Logique*, p. 412.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 445.

upon inspection. This may best be explained by repeating Condillac's illustration.

"I have a number of counters in each hand. If I pass one from the right hand into the left, I will have as many in the one as in the other. If I pass one from the left into the right, I will have twice as many in the latter. The problem is to find the number of counters in each hand." Here, as in all problems, the solution is contained in the data, and it is merely a question of restating the problem in such a way that this solution becomes apparent. In other words, the reasoning process adds nothing new to its data. The solution of a problem is either contained in the given conditions or it is never obtained; if it is there, the task of reason is to rearrange its material until the solution is obvious. If we now proceed to simplify our statement of the problem in question we may state the number of counters in the right hand by saying: "The number that you have in the right hand when you have taken one counter away, is equal to the number that you have in the left hand when to the latter one has been added." Stated more briefly and concisely it will become: "The number in your right hand diminished by a unit, is equal to that in the left, increased by a unit." More briefly still: "The number of your right, minus a unit, equals the number of your left, plus a unit." Until finally we have the expression: "The right minus one equals the left plus one." The second condition of the problem may be simplified by the same process; and we then have the two stated in their simplest terms, thus:

The right minus one equals the left plus one.

The right plus one equals two lefts minus one.

Simplified expressions of this kind, Condillac points out, are called "equations" in mathematics. Each is composed of two equal members; for example, in the first equation *the right minus one* is one member, and *the left plus one* is the other. In each expression the known quantities (*minus one*, *plus one*, and *minus two*) are mingled with the unknowns (*right* and *left*). When the equations have been reduced to

these simplified forms it will be easily discerned that the knowns may be separated out from the unknowns, one unknown expressed in terms of the other, and the equations combined thus:

The left plus two equals two lefts plus three.

Bringing together the knowns and the unknowns, we will be able to restate our problem as:

Two plus three equals two lefts minus one left.

Two plus three equals one left.

Five equals one left.

This is an example of the manner in which all reasoning proceeds. It has certain materials given by experience, and its function is so to arrange and combine the elements, that the facts contained in them may be apparent. All discoveries are made in this way, not, as many have thought, by starting the machinery of reason to work on nothing, evolving its own axioms and elaborating a whole system of results. It is evident that if we lack the terms by means of which to analyze experience, reason has nothing to work upon, nothing to arrange. Conversely, the simpler the language into which we can translate our thought, the easier becomes the task of reason; and here the tremendous advantage of mathematics is at once apparent. By means of the signs which algebra substitutes for the more awkward terms such as 'plus,' 'minus,' 'equals,' and by using letters to denote the unknown quantities, the perfection of clearness and economy is attained. But while algebraic symbols make reasoning easier, they do not change its essential nature, and it is fundamentally the same process whether it be employed upon physical facts or upon those of metaphysics. Thus Condillac, the empiricist, can hold up mathematics as the perfect type of reasoning, without prejudice to his other principles.

Logical analysis, metaphysical analysis, and mathematical analysis, says Condillac, are all the same; a passage from known to unknown by a succession of judgments, in which each merely repeats in a different order and in different

terms the substance of the preceding ones.¹⁴ Logical cogency consists in this identity of judgments; and with the elimination of superfluous words and the narrowing down of propositions to bare formulae, the perception of this identity becomes increasingly easy. Whenever analysis "speaks the language it ought to speak" it cannot fail to achieve results. All real science is exact science; and if some supposed sciences fall short of this ideal and do not seem capable of demonstration, it is because we speak without having made a language, and without suspecting that it is necessary to make one: for all sciences would be equally exact if in each we spoke a well-constructed language. "It is thus," says Condillac, "that we have treated metaphysics in the first part of this work. For example, we have explained the generation of the faculties of mind only because we have seen that they are all identical with the faculty of sensation; and our demonstrations, carried out by means of words, are just as rigorous as demonstrations with letters. . . ."¹⁵ To ask what is the source (*l'origine*) and the generation of the faculties of the human understanding, is to ask what is the source and the generation of those faculties by which man, capable of sensations, conceives things in forming ideas of them; and we see at once that attention, comparison, judgment, reflection, imagination, and reasoning are, together with the sensations, the knowns of the problem; and that the source and the generation are the unknowns. . . . But how shall we separate out the source and generation which are here the unknowns? Nothing could be simpler. By the *source* we understand the known which is the principle or the beginning of all the others, and by the *generation*, the manner in which all the knowns come from a first one. The source which I am seeking is known to me as a faculty, but not known to be the first. This, then, is the unknown which is mixed up with all the knowns and must be disengaged from them. But the slightest observation brings to my attention

¹⁴ *Logique*, p. 437.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 444.

the fact that the faculty of sensing (*sentir*) is mingled with all the others. Sensation, then, is the value of the first unknown, that is, the *source* or origin, and it remains to discover how it becomes successively attention, comparison, judgment, etc. This is what we have done; and we have seen that, as equations $x - 1 = y + 1$ and $x + 1 = 2y - 2$ pass through different transformations to become finally $y = 5$, $x = 7$, so sensation passes through different transformations until it becomes the 'understanding.' " ¹⁶

Logical demonstration is not our only source of certainty. Condillac tells us, though we must grant to it the highest degree of certitude and rely upon it exclusively in science. There are other ways than this, however, in which we may come by convictions. Besides the evidence of reason—which consists in identity—there is the evidence of fact. This results from observation, the counting of cases, and has a high degree of practical certainty. The third type of evidence, that of *feeling* (*sentiment*) arises from an observation of self, and has the least certainty of any. Reasoning by analogy may also be fruitful, although it, too, has degrees of validity. Of all kinds of reasoning that by analogy of resemblance is the least trustworthy, and that based upon the relation of cause to effect and effect to cause is the most trustworthy.

It is commonly supposed, says Condillac, that the fallacies of reasoning due to language can be eliminated by defining everything. Thus all logical procedure is assumed to start with definitions. But all that a definition does is to serve as a substitute for the actual thing when it is not present to sense. The definition: *a triangle is a surface determined by three straight lines*, fills the function of an actual triangle as an object for analysis. All definitions, however, do not equally represent the object. Thus, *the mind is a substance which feels* is a very inadequate definition considered from this point of view, although it may very well follow as a result of analysis. And yet it has been the custom of genera-

¹⁶ *Logique*, pp. 450-451.

tions of philosophers to take just such unrepresentative definitions as exhaustive of reality, and attempt to derive from them whole systems of truth. If a definition is to stand for the actual object it must be comprehensive, having been arrived at by careful analysis of its prototype. To us it may seem immediately evident, for instance, that a triangle is a surface bounded by three straight lines; but the process of arriving at this definition entails considerable analysis and counting of sides if a child be the observer. On the other hand, to know a thing it is not necessary to be able to define it. All that we must know how to do is to see it as it is, and to do this we must have observed it many times from many angles, and with the definite purpose of seeing it as it is.

It is *synthesis* which leads to the mania for definitions, "that obscure method which always begins where it ought to end, and which, nevertheless, has been called the method of doctrine."¹⁷ Condillac confesses that he cannot describe this method precisely, either because he has not been able to understand it or because it cannot be understood. Synthesis and analysis cannot be identified with composition and decomposition, for the former are mutually exclusive, whereas the latter are interdependent and complementary. Any chain of reasoning, whether it be sound or fallacious, whether it be analytical or synthetic, will make use of both composition and decomposition alternately. It is impossible to use the one without using the other. Analysis is the *natural* method, and it includes both composition and decomposition, induction and deduction; it is the method "which, beginning at the beginning, shows in analogy the formation of language, and in the formation of language, the progress of science."¹⁸

Although Condillac labors to set his method definitely apart from that of the metaphysics which he abhors, his results are not entirely satisfactory. Undoubtedly he saw clearly enough what was objectionable in the current philosophy but it was difficult for him to analyze it in terms of

¹⁷ *Logique*, p. 431.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 433.

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method. 'Synthesis' and 'analysis' have come to be as little characteristic of distinct methods as the 'composition' and 'decomposition' which he discards as adequate designations of opposite methods. But it is clear that by synthesis, "that affectuation of subtle reasoning which fatigues the mind and explains nothing," he understands many of those faults of rationalism which we condemn today, although he emphasizes in his indictment a particular misuse of reason, involving an exaggeration of its powers and a belief in the feasibility of its use. He has not been led to a wholesale condemnation of deduction, as we might perhaps expect from his empirical point of view and his admiration for Bacon. He saw, to be sure, that in teaching, one must advance from the known to the unknown, from the particular to the general, but he was much too level-headed to regard induction as a method universally fruitful. Science must employ both methods and it must not scorn hypotheses, for the latter are guides of observation, without which it could never reach true generalization.

Mathematics furnishes the best illustration of Condillac's method, because its terminology is exact and it therefore shows most clearly the way in which reasoning proceeds—for even an empiricist must reason. It is not the mathematical method which Condillac condemns, but the mathematical *construction of systems*. If the preliminary analysis could be complete and the definitions adequate, philosophy might well be a science like mathematics. But the physical world is exceedingly complex, and under the present disability of language, definitions are seldom adequate. Thus philosophers like Spinoza, who adopt a few axioms or arbitrary definitions, and proceed to construct a beautifully concatenated system of cause and effect based upon these ghost-like representatives of reality, end in abstract, impossible dreams that have no relation to actual experience. They substitute lean definitions for the rich data of experience as objects of analysis; they use words having all the faults of inaccuracy and indefiniteness, and the result is that their

reasoning is bad and their systems false. "Clear and distinct ideas" are what they presume to build upon, but their terms are vague, and teeming with conflicting connotations. From dark and obscure beginnings can be derived almost anything but clarity and truth, as the "monstrous" systems of Descartes, Leibniz, and Spinoza testify.

Descartes, Condillac, finds, has assumed a mechanical principle according to which he interprets facts without analyzing them in their own right or attempting to test his conclusions. He builds up a system by definition, beginning with a doubt which is absurd and impracticable and using a criterion of truth which is unsound psychologically. The sanctions of this criterion he finds in the clear and distinct idea he has of his own existence; but he goes on to apply it to propositions of all kinds without ever comparing them directly with the idea which constitutes his sanction. Mention has already been made of Condillac's denial of innate ideas and intuitive truths, hence the objections brought up in the *Traité des systèmes* need not be repeated here. Certainly the critics who find such grave inconsistencies between the *Traité des systèmes* and the *Logique* could not point to any specific doctrine, for the very things emphasized as the faults of Descartes' system in the former are brought out with equal or greater force in the latter.

In Leibniz's notion of the force which the monad possesses Condillac finds an inherent self-contradiction. This force is an effort, according to Leibniz, and yet it finds no obstacles. But, says Condillac, if there is no resistance in a simple being, there is no force, and if there is force, there is no resistance. Using the term *force*, Leibniz explains no more than if he said that there is in monads some reason for the changes they undergo, without specifying what this reason might be. "One sees here the usual defects of abstract systems; vague notions and unknown objects explained by others which one knows no better."¹⁹ Leibniz also has in-

¹⁹ *Traité des systèmes*, p. 138.

sufficient ground for granting perception to monads. Unless he *knows* what makes mind a thinking substance and that monads have this quality, he cannot say that they perceive. All that monads have in common with mind is indivisibility and unextendedness, and he does not know that mind thinks by virtue of these properties. Again, he has said that the monads *represent, mirror, and image* the universe. All of these terms, says Condillac, signify nothing of the particular nature of sensation. All that we can understand by this conception of the monad's consciousness is that each monad bears a certain relation to other monads. The fault here is that of using in a figurative sense words which have no definite philosophical significance. By the use of such words Leibniz shows that he has no precise notion of any of these things, without which it is obvious that he cannot profitably reason about them. Condillac cannot understand how, merely because monads are interrelated, one monad should be said to *represent* all the others, any more than we should say that one side of a triangle represents the other two sides and the three angles. Nor does he understand how each mind-monad can have a body, and each body a dominating entelechy. He is obliged to conceive the same monads as making up bodies and at the same time animating them, but Leibniz's theory, of course, does not admit of any such interpretation.

Condillac sums up his criticism of the system of Leibniz thus: "This philosopher has given us no notion of the force of monads, and in attempting to do so he uses only metaphors. He loses himself in the infinite, and really explains nothing. It is almost as if he had said that there is extension because there is something that is not extended; and that there is body because there is something which is not body, *i. e.*, monads." ²⁰

It is in the system of Spinoza, however, that Condillac finds the best example of the pernicious way in which abstract systems are built. It is not to the mathematical form in which the philosophy is expressed that he objects, but to the

²⁰ *Traité des systèmes*, p. 149.

assumptions underlying it. In order that a mathematical method may be used to advantage, he reminds us, clarity of ideas and precision of signs are necessary above all else, and we fail to find these things in Spinoza. Condillac translates the first part of the *Ethics* literally, criticizing it proposition by proposition. To follow him in this would involve us in unnecessary detail. His only object, as he tells us, is to show that Spinoza has no idea of the things which he postulates, that his definitions are vague, his axioms inexact, his propositions imaginary and useless as a source of future knowledge.²¹

Absolute principles, he concludes in the *Traité des systèmes*, as in the *Logique*, are useless and dangerous; their status in philosophy being about the same as that of proverbs in life. Hypotheses are a necessary means to knowledge, but they must be tested and checked up by facts; indeed, it is only as objects of investigation that they have value. Arithmetic should serve philosophy as a model; but before this can become possible the terminology of science must be made precise. In order to make discoveries we must observe, experiment, and analyze, using our theories merely as guides in our researches; for abstract systems, desk-made hypotheses having no relation to actuality, retard scientific progress and cause the degeneration of the reasoning faculty.²²

²¹ *Traité des systèmes*, p. 250. Commenting upon the proposition that "will and the understanding are in relation to the divine nature as movement and rest," he exclaims: "Quel langage! se servir du mouvement et repos pour expliquer la volonté et l'entendement;" *Ibid.*, p. 244.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 267.

CONCLUSION

In the foregoing chapters no attempt has been made to treat the philosophy of Condillac as a whole, nor to set forth in any detail his relation to the English empiricists. It is his naturalism that gives character and originality to his thought, and it has been with a view to displaying this aspect of his philosophy that our critical examination has been made. "Un bon ennemi de la superstition," Voltaire called him; and it has been our purpose to point out the particular superstitions which he attacked and the way in which he overcame them. With tremendous faith in the method of science, he conceived its application to a field which had hitherto been the special province of the supernatural; and he anticipated the discovery of universal laws to which the phenomena in this field were subject and by which they could be explained, just as physical science is to be explained in terms of mechanical laws.

The mysterious faculty of the *will* has become in Condillac's analysis only a particular form of desire — a desire with full confidence of satisfaction — and this in turn is only a development of a primitive and fundamental need. The *self* becomes, not an immediately intuited existence, but a body of related experiences built up around a core of organic sensations. The assumption of an internal sense is not justified by experience nor does it simplify the explanation of the higher faculties. Condillac accordingly repudiates the "reflection" of Locke, and rests his experience upon sensation alone. The mind is created by its first sensation, and every succeeding experience is only another sensation; for the mind does nothing fundamentally different on this occasion from what it did on the first. It grows with repeated experiences but the character of its action remains the same.

Our distinctly human attributes — our reason, our moral and aesthetic appreciation, our religion — all result from the use of language. Without words we should be utterly unable to conceive those abstractions which underlie the perception

of the true, the beautiful, and the good. We should be without the tradition by which these things are handed down; for we apprehend the good and the beautiful, not through a moral or aesthetic sense, but by means of standards which we have learned in learning a language. "Taste" is a habit and the same is true of morality.

Thus, by the association of ideas and the process of habit-formation, Condillac seeks to explain the intellectual activities and the social behavior of man. Precisely the same principles explain animal behavior and enable us to account for whatever intelligence and purposiveness it exhibits. An animal's activity is subject to the same psychological laws as the conduct of human beings, but because the latter have the use of arbitrary signs they are able to deal with things through their symbolic representatives. Thus man's world in space and time is incalculably larger than that of the brute. Except for revived sensations the animal lives in the present and is limited to his immediate environment, while the life of man is that of the future, and the whole world is his environment. No other factor than language is necessary to account for the vast superiority of man. Since, however, the animal has not, and presumably never will have the use of speech, Condillac grants that some essential difference must exist between the brute and man.

We have devoted some space to the discussion of Condillac's conception of the scientific method, mainly in order to dispel the apparent contradiction between his interest in symbolic logic and his empirical principles. We have attempted to show that his emphasis upon the formal nature of logic, far from denying the value of experience, lies at the very heart of his empiricism; for it is his thesis that reason in no sense creates either its data or its conclusions, but that it merely rearranges and recombines the facts of sense experience and states them in such a way that latent relations become obvious. The success of reason, or logic, depends upon an adequate terminology, and this is achieved by means of a rigorous analysis of experience. The more definite and uni-

vocal our words can be made, the simpler becomes the task of reason; hence the process of creating a science is one with the construction of a scientific terminology.

Condillac has been much maligned by his romantic and spiritualistic successors, some of whom have attempted to belittle his contributions to philosophy by denying him any originality whatever, while others have sought to damn him forever as a gross materialist. The spiritualistic reaction has passed its crisis, but there is danger that Condillac's name may never be vindicated, so prone are we to accept the traditional estimate of a man without reevaluation. Condillac is a representative figure of his time, and that time is kin in spirit to our own. It is fitting, then, that, freed from some of the prejudices of Romanticism, we turn our attention again to the eighteenth century, even if we must do it with a new bias of our own. A fairer judgment of its thought, and a saner guide of our own should reward our study.

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DEATH AND BURIAL LORE
IN THE
ENGLISH AND SCOTTISH POPULAR BALLADS

BY ROWEN CHARLES WAINESLY, Ph.D.

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LOWRY CHARLES WIMBERLY, PH D.

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PREFACE

In this study I have attempted to make for the English and Scottish popular ballads an exhaustive survey of those matters that relate to death and burial. The available materials have fallen under such sectional headings as blood revenge, barbarous practices, the ordeal, capital punishment, death omens and dreams, the "dead-bell," mourning, the lyke-wake, and the grave. I have not in this investigation considered the ballad *revenant*, a subject to which I have devoted a chapter in another and more extensive work on religion and magic in the English ballads, a work to be published in the near future.

That popular ballads or folksongs are repositories of beliefs and customs that in many instances belong to early and even primitive culture has long been recognized, but as yet no one has undertaken the task of making a searching analysis of the ballads from this angle of approach. In his great work *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* Professor Child has, to be sure, taken into account much of the folklore embodied in British balladry, but his observations and conclusions are so scattered throughout his collection that they are not readily available. Moreover, he has, probably for some excellent reason, left out of account many items of popular custom and belief that ought to be drawn together in one place with those matters of which he has taken cognizance. A number of dissertations on particular phases of the folklore in British balladry followed hard upon the completion of Child's work, but these studies, passable though some of them are, fall short in point of exhausting the materials that they purport to treat. In his *Das Geistermotiv in den schottisch-englischen Volksballaden* (Marburg, 1914) Konrad Ehrke examines our baker's dozen of ghost ballads without, however, taking into account significant material that occurs sporadically in pieces that are not to be classified as ghost ballads. A study more nearly related to the present investigation is Walter Jaehde's *Religion, Schicksalsglaube, Vorahnungen, Traume, Geister und Rätsel in den Englisch-*

Schottischen Volksballaden (Halle, 1905), but here again there are obvious gaps since the writer has, for one thing, failed to examine all the Child variants of the ballads that he uses.

The present study is based on Child's *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, a work that may fairly be called definitive. I have, however, in order to make my investigation as representative as possible, consulted a great number of ballad collections that have appeared from time to time since the publication of Child's monumental anthology. But these anthologies, valuable though they are, do not, in the way of folklore, yield much beyond what may be found in the Child pieces. Perhaps the most significant of these recent collections is that of the late Gavin Greig, *Last Leaves of Traditional Ballads and Ballad Airs* (University of Aberdeen Studies, 1925), a work admirably edited by Alexander Keith. Among other important collections consulted in the present investigation are the following: Gavin Greig, *Folk-Song of the North-East*; Olive Dame Campbell and Cecil J. Sharp, *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*; Louise Pound, *American Ballads and Songs*; John Harrington Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South*; Cecil J. Sharp and Rev. Charles L. Marson, *Folk Songs from Somerset*. I have also examined the many excellent texts recorded in the various numbers of the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society* and in the *Journal of American Folk-Lore*. The foregoing works, along with other anthologies that I have consulted, are included in the bibliography at the end of this study.

Throughout the preparation of this study as well as of my study of religion and magic in the English ballads, an investigation referred to earlier in this preface, I have felt my indebtedness, for encouragement and direction, to Hutton Webster, Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Nebraska, and Louise Pound, Professor of the English Language at the University of Nebraska.

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I
INTRODUCTION

In its tragic moments English and Scottish balladry recalls inevitably such early Northern poetry as *Beowulf*, certain of the Eddic lays, and the *Nibelungenlied*. That is, in mood or spirit, at least, a song like *Earl Brand* or *Child Maurice* or, again, *The Cruel Brother* may be regarded as a *précis* of the *Nibelungen Lay*. With the exception that in the ballads we have little of the mythological, there is the same play of elemental human forces, the same basic motives, the same direct coming to grips with life, the same clash of man with destiny, the same sombre, fatalistic outlook, the same crushing imminence of death and disaster. And it is noteworthy that this grim mood or philosophy of the Teutonic ballad, its awareness of and insistence upon the darker side of human experience, is seldom brightened by Christian thought. Indeed, Christianity seldom enters the ballads legitimately. As a rule, where it does enter, it is readily detected as a superimposition on the basically pagan character of folksong. This is well borne out in supernatural ballads, songs with which, however, we have no particular concern here. It is strikingly evidenced, moreover, in songs of love and death, especially, songs of vengeance, and in the frankly barbarous customs through which this vengeance manifests itself. This study is concerned in part with such matters as death omens, dreams, and taboos, the lyke-wake, mourning customs, and the grave, but by way of approaching these subjects and in order to reveal something of the tragic and even ferocious mood of certain ballads we cannot do better than to dwell for a time upon the revenge motive and the concomitant practices.¹

¹ The sacredness of revenge is likewise evidenced in Danish balladry. Notable instances are those in the excellent songs *Hævnersværdet*, *Liden Engel*, and *Ung Villum*, the last-named piece a close analogue of the British ballad *Fause Foodrage* (89). On the revenge motive in *Hævnersværdet* see *infra*, p. 8, note 4.

Blood Revenge. Whether or not vengeance taken for the death of relatives is evidential of the cult of the family *manes*, we find that blood revenge carries in balladry somewhat of its ancient obligation. In *Johnnie Armstrong*, *Hughie Grame*, and *The Baron of Brackley* this sacred obligation is voiced by a child still "by his nurses knee." News of his father's having been treacherously slain has been brought young Armstrong: ²

Newes then was brought to young Ionne Aimestrong,
As he stood by his nurses knee,
Who vowed if ere he live'd for to be a man,
O the treacherous Scots revengd hee'd be.

Or better, in another version: ³

"If ever I live for to be a man,⁴
My fathers blood revenged shall be."

In much the same language and by a child no less precocious ⁵ revenge is threatened in *Hughie Grame* and *The Baron of Brackley*.⁶

The ties of kinship are no less strong in *Fause Foodrage*, according to which a son, before he comes to manhood, slays his father's murderer: ⁷

² No. 169 A 17

³ B 24.

⁴ Cf. the Danish ballad *Hævnersvurdet*, translation, Alexander Prior, Prior, *Ancient Danish Ballads*, I, 273:

Up spake the child in cradle lain,
"So vengest thou a father slain?"

"The vengeance, thou has wreak'd for thine,
Grant God I live to take for mine!"

"I've well avenged a father dead,
To vengeance thou shalt not be bred."

With that the threatening brat he slew,
With one blow cut him through and through.

⁵ Commenting on the passage in *Johnnie Armstrong* (169 A 17, B 24), Professor Child (*English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, III, 367) observes: "Not infrequently, in popular ballads, a very young (even unborn) child speaks, by miracle, to save a life, vindicate innocence, or for other kindly occasion; sometimes again to threaten revenge, as here." On the occurrence of this incident in various literatures see Child, *ibid.*, III, 367 and n.

⁶ Nos. 191 E 15, H 14 (Child, *Ballads*, IV, 519), 203 A 41

⁷ No. 89 B 18.

"Thou murdered my father dear,⁸
 When scarce conceived was I;
 Thou murdered my father dear,
 When scarce conceived was me:"
 So then he slew that Eastmure king,
 Beneath that garden tree.

The related ballad of *Jellon Grame*, one text of which preserves the ancient trait of the precocious child,⁹ recounts a story of a youth who takes similar vengeance on his mother's murderer. This song preserves, too, the superstition of the guilt of blood — where innocent blood has been shed the grass will not grow:¹⁰

"O how is this," the youth cried out,
 "If it to you is known,
 How all this wood is growing grass,
 And on that small spot grows none?"

"Since you do wonder, bonnie boy,
 I shall tell you anon;
 That is indeed the very spot
 I killed your mother in."

He caught hold of Henry's brand,¹¹
 And stroked it ower a strae,
 And thro and thro Hind Henry's sides
 He made the cauld metal gae.

In another ballad, *Earl Rothas*, Lady Ann's youthful brother threatens that when he is "able a sword to carry" he will thrust it through Earl Rothas' body for using his "sister sae

⁸ Cf. A 34

⁹ No. 90 C 18:

He grew as big in ae year auld
 As some boys woud in three.

And upon being sent to "squeel-house," "he learned as muckle in ae year's time as some boys would in five" Cf. B 15. "It is interesting," says Child (II, 303), "to find an ancient and original trait preserved in so extremely corrupted a version as C." Child quotes the following lines from the somewhat analogous Norse ballad (Bugge, *Norske Folkeviser*, p. 113, st. 17):

Mei voks unge Ingelbrett
 í dei maanar tvaa
 hell híne smaabonni
 vokse paa aatte aar.

Cf. the boy champion in *Sir Aldingar* (59), and for further examples see Child, V, 492. "Precocity of etc."

¹⁰ B 19 ff.

¹¹ Cf. A 20 ff.

basely."¹² The uncle-nephew relationship, a kinship reflected in balladry by the specific phrase "his sister's son,"¹³ actuates blood revenge in *The Lads of Wamphray*. Willy, the nephew, lives to carry out his oath of vengeance:¹⁴

"But if ever I live Wamphray to see,
My uncle's death revenged shall be!"

And later:

"For every finger o the Galiard's hand,¹⁵
I vow this day I've killed a man."

The "farewell"¹⁶ in *The Death of Percy Reed* reaches its climax in the dying man's claim upon his followers to remember the treachery of the "Ha's" and the "fate o the laird Troughend." Like Hughie Grame in the ballad of that name, Percy Reed wills to his avengers not only the deed but the weapons of vengeance:¹⁷

"The laird o Clennel bears my bow,¹⁸
The laird o Branden bears my brand;
Wheneer they ride i the Border-side,
They'll mind the fate o the laird Troughend."

"And ye may tell my kith and kin," says the dying hero in the Johnson copy of *Hughie Grame*, "I never did disgrace their blood."¹⁹ In other texts he names Johnny Armstrong to carry on the death feud:²⁰

¹² No. 297, st. 8.

¹³ The nephew in this ballad is not, however, spoken of specifically as a "sister's son." On the sister's son in the ballads see F. B. Gummere, "The Sister's Son," *An English Miscellany*, the Furnivall Memorial Volume (Oxford, 1901). See also Gummere, *The Popular Ballad*, pp. 121, 125, 183 f., 200.

¹⁴ No. 184, st. 22

¹⁵ St. 35

¹⁶ On Good-Nights in balladry see Gummere, *The Popular Ballad*, pp. 211 ff. See Child ballads: nos 169 C, 187 A, 195, 208, 305. *Lord Maxwell's Last Goodnight* (195 A) reads in part:

"Aduc, madam my mother dear,
But and my sister[s] two!
Fair well, Robin in the Orchet!
Fore the my heart is wo."

¹⁷ No. 193 B 41.

¹⁸ Cf. A 18, and text, Child, IV, 521, st. 21.

¹⁹ No. 191 B 14

²⁰ A 23.

" Here, Johnny Armstrong, take thou my sword,²¹
 That is made of the mettle so fine,
 And when thou comst to the border-side,
 Remember the death of Sir Hugh of the Gume."

Bitter and ancient feud literally flames up in the burning of a castle and its inmates in *Captain Car*,²² a ballad of cruelty and mutilations, and so, too, in *The Fire of Frendraught*.²³ Not found in the Child versions, there occurs in Gavin Greig's variant of this latter piece a stanza according to which the mother is admonished to train her young son up to vengeance:²⁴

" An' bid her train her young son up
 That when a man he'd be,
 Upon this hooose for this cruel deed
 Avenged he will be."

The terrible revenge in *Lamkin* does not belong here,²⁵ nor, perhaps, the fatal penalty inflicted by slighted fraternal authority upon the sister in *The Cruel Brother*,²⁶ although lesser offenses in balladry cry for vengeance.²⁷ We may now turn our attention to those ferocious practices through which vengeance makes itself felt.

Barbarities. The barbarous or savage practices now to be detailed, such as cutting out an enemy's heart or tongue, striking off an enemy's head and sticking it upon a pike, or

²¹ Cf. C 16, D 15, H 13, and I 11 (Child, IV, 519 f.).

²² No. 178. Cf. *The Bonny House o Airlie* (199).

²³ No. 196.

²⁴ Gavin Greig, *Last Leaves of Traditional Ballads and Ballad Airs*, edited by Alexander Keith, p. 122, st. 16.

²⁵ No. 93. See *infra*, pp. 14 f.

²⁶ No. 11. Cf. Barry's text, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, XXVIII, 300, and Barry's comment on the motive for the crime or rather the slaying of the bride: "The texts hitherto known — excluding, of course, those obviously defective — agree, in that the bride is killed by her brother because his consent to the wedding has not been sought. In the present version the situation is unique, the brother acting as the agent of his wife's ill will. A motive for the curse in the final stanza is thus clear."

²⁷ Writing in 1803, Sir Walter Scott says: "Two generations have not elapsed since the custom of drinking deep, and taking deadly revenge for slight offences, produced very tragical events on the Border; to which the custom of going armed to festive meetings contributed not a little." (*Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, ed. T. F. Henderson, III, 76.) See nos. 211 and 214 B, C, D, E, etc.

severing the hands and feet, are not to be explained as incidents conjured up by the narrator to lend horrific embellishment to a tale. However late they may have entered the ballad story or however recently the ballad may have been recorded, these customs reflect modes of life that could spring only from a wild and savage culture.²⁸

Vengeance has not forgotten how to cut out the heart of an enemy in *Sir James the Rose*, an historical ballad:²⁹

Now they have taken out his heart,³⁰
And stuck it on a spear,
And took it to the House of Marr,
And gave it to his dear.

A similar incident is related in *Captain Car*, the Cotton Manuscript, a ballad that records an actual occurrence of the sixteenth century. The Lady of Crecynbroghe will not yield her castle, but she would save her "eldest sonne," the "ayre" of all her land. So she gives him over to her enemy, who, proving himself a perjured knight, cuts out the youth's tongue and heart:³¹

He cut his tonge out of his head,³²
His hart out of his brest

²⁸ Interpreting certain incidents in Irish legend, G. I. Gomine, in his *Ethnology in Folklore*, pp. 148 f., expresses the point of view of these pages: "The story of Bran's head being cut off by the seven survivors of his army and taken with them to their own country, where they preserved it and feasted with it, is still more to the point in illustration of savage custom rather than of mythic thought, while the story of Lomna's head struck off and stuck upon a pike while his slayers cooked their food goes still further in the same direction, because of the implied custom connected with the plot of the story of placing some food in the mouth of the dead man's head."

²⁹ No. 213, st. 20.

³⁰ Cf. readings b, c, d, e, f, g (Child, IV, 158 f.).

³¹ No. 178 A 16 f.

³² Cf. D 18 f. it is the daughter who is let down, and on "the point of Edom's speir she gat a deadly fa." The striking passage in a subsequent stanza (20) deserves quotation here:

Then wi his speir he turnd hir owr;
O gin her face was wan'
He said, You are the first that eer
I wist alive again.

(Cf. text, Greig, *Last Leaves of Traditional Ballads*, p. 111. Cf. Child's G 29 f.: the babe "gat a deidlie fa" "on the point o Gordon's sword." In other texts vengeance stops at burning the inmates of the castle.

He lapt them in a handkerchief,
 And knet it of knotes three,
 And cast them ouer the castell-wall,
 At that gay ladye.

Legendary history of Irish warriors furnishes examples of the practice of cutting off the point of a slain enemy's tongue,³³ and, on the whole, Captain Car is not far removed from the savage warrior who consumes or cherishes as trophies parts of his enemy's body. In *Lady Diamond*, a ballad that is "one of a large number of repetitions of Boccaccio's tale of Guiscardo and Ghismonda,"³⁴ a lover's heart is cut out and sent in a cup of gold to his mistress, the king's daughter.³⁵

The head is legitimate spoil in balladry, and in a song of tragic mistake Child Maurice loses his to John Stewart:³⁶

Then hee pulled fforth his bright browne sword,
 And dried itt on his sleeue,
 And the first good stroke Iohn Stewart stroke,
 Child Maurice head he did cleuee.

And then Child Maurice's head is "pricked" on a "swords poynt," to be borne as a trophy by the victor:

And he pricked itt on his swords poynt,³⁷
 Went singing there beside,

³³ Whitley Stokes, *Revue Celtique*, I, 261; V, 232.

³⁴ Child, *Ballads*, V, 29.

³⁵ No. 269. Cf. texts, Greig, *op. cit.*, pp. 213 f.. the "bonnie boy's heart" is put "on a plate o gold" or "stuck" on a spear.

³⁶ No. 83 A 27.

³⁷ Cf. D 20 ff.: "the slayer puts the head "on a spear" and bears it to his victim's mother in a "braid basin." E 25 dishonors Chield Morrice more completely. His severed head is borne by the "meanest man" in all Lord Barnard's train:

Then he's taen up that bloody head,
 And stuck it on a spear,
 And the meanest man in a' his train
 Gat Chield Morice head to bear.

The foregoing is the reading in an Aberdeenshire version, Greig, *op. cit.*, p. 65, st. 32. According to Child's F 33, the head "cum trailing to the toun." In B, C, D Lord Barnard threw "the head into her lap, saying, Lady, there's a ball!" E 27: "he's taen up this bluidy head, and dashed it gainst the wa: 'Come down, come down, you ladies fair, and play at this foot-ba.'" In B 16, C 21, C 25, E 28, F 38 the lady took up the bloody head and "kissed it frae cheek to chin."

In only one of the Child texts of *Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard* does the hero suffer decapitation.³⁸

Various motives, wanton cruelty or outraged love, account for the head severing in *Babylon*, *Lizie Wan*, *Lamkin*, and *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet*. Decapitation in the first of these pieces is expeditious enough even though the instrument is a pen-knife and the block a "staff":³⁹

"It's lean your head upon my staff,"⁴⁰
And with his pen-knife he has cutted it aff."

The brother-lover in *Lizie Wan* is not content with cutting off his sister's head. He must also cut her body in three:⁴¹

And he has cutted aff Lizie Wan's head,
And her fair body in three.

There is similar cleaving of the body in an American text of *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet*, an added mutilation that does not occur in the Child versions of this piece.⁴² In two of the Child copies *Lord Thomas*, for his infidelity to *Faire Ellinor*, makes horrible amends by cutting off his brown bride's head, throwing it "against the wall," and then falling upon his own sword.⁴³

The cruel vengeance of the mason in *Lamkin* is perhaps without parallel in ballad story. In one text only, however, does *Lamkin* cut off his victim's head. He then hangs it up

³⁸ No. 81 O (Child, IV, 478). In American texts it is the lady who is beheaded: Campbell and Sharp, *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, p. 87, st. 15; J. H. Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South*, p. 95, st. 9.

³⁹ No. 14 C 5.

⁴⁰ In certain Swedish analogues of *Babylon*, a ballad "familiar to all the branches of the Scandinavian race," the murderers cut off the girls' heads on the trunk of a birch. See *Child, Ballads*, I, 171 ff.

⁴¹ No. 51 A 6. Cf. B 9.

⁴² Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, p. 58. "He cut this brown girl's head smooth off and cleaved the body apart."

⁴³ No. 73 D 18, D e (Child, II, 196). This incident does not occur in the other Child texts but it is present in the following variants recovered since Child: *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, II, 105 ff., fourth and fifth versions; Ella M. Leather, *Folk-Lore of Herefordshire*, pp. 200 f.; *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, XVIII, 128; XIX, 253 ff., a, b, c; XX, 254 f.; Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, pp. 55 ff., A, B, C; Josephine McGill, *Folk Songs of the Kentucky Mountains*, pp. 26 f.; Louise Pound, *American Ballads and Songs*, pp. 27 ff.; Mackenzie, *The Quest of the Ballad*, pp. 97 ff.; Cox, *op. cit.*, pp. 46 ff., A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I.

in the kitchen where it gives off a supernatural light such as that shed in other texts of this piece by mantles or smock and in other ballads by sword or rings: ⁴⁴

Then he cut aff her head ⁴⁵
 from her lily breast-bane,
 And he hung't up in the kitchen,
 it made a' the ha shine.

In *Lord Ingram and Chiel Wyet* a terrible stroke by one lover sends the head of his rival flying "fifty feet oer a burken buss." ⁴⁶ But to conclude this matter of severed heads, that of Andrew Barton is borne home to England as proof of Lord Haward's prowess: ⁴⁷

The pyrates head he brought along ⁴⁸
 For to present unto our king.

This same ballad gives a hint of cannibalistic feasting in the incident of the "thirtie" heads of his enemies that Andrew Barton sent home "to eate with breade": ⁴⁹

"Once I met with the Portingails,
 Yea, I met with them, ye, I indeed;
 I salted thirtie of their heades,
 And sent them home to eate with breade."

Professor Child regards this incident as "a ferocious addition of the ballad," ⁵⁰ but it is no doubt an addition suggested by actual practice ⁵¹ as we may conclude from the somewhat analogous case detailed by Sir Walter Scott in his notes on the poem *Lord Soulis*. "The tradition regarding the death of Lord Soulis, however singular," says Scott, "is not without parallel in the real history of Scotland. The same extraordinary mode of cookery was actually practised (*horresco*

⁴⁴ On this incident of objects that give off supernatural light see F. B. Gummere, *The Popular Ballad*, pp. 302 f.

⁴⁵ No. 93 B 22

⁴⁶ No. 66 D 8.

⁴⁷ *Sir Andrew Barton* (167 B 57).

⁴⁸ Cf. A 71: "with his head they sayled into England againe." See also text, Child, IV, 506, st. 73.

⁴⁹ Child, IV, 505, st. 42.

⁵⁰ *Ballads*, IV, 502 b.

⁵¹ "It would appear, then," says Gomme (*Ethnology in Folklore*, p. 192), "that cannibal rites were continued in these islands until historic times."

referens) upon the body of a sheriff of the Mearns" ⁵² In this connection we should not overlook our ballad evidence of the ancient practice of blood-drinking as reflected in *The Braes o Yarrow*: ⁵³

She kissed his cheek, she kaimd his hair,⁵⁴
As oft she did before, O;
She drank the red blood frae him ran,
On the dowy houns o Yarrow.

In *The Earl of Westmoreland*, a ballad imitative in part of "stale old romance," ⁵⁵ the hero, like the victor in *Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard*, decapitates his enemy and bears the head triumphantly about: ⁵⁶

Hee tooke the head vpon his sword-poynt,⁵⁷
And carryed it amongst his host soe fayre;

Mutilating the face and cutting off the hands and feet of an enemy are practices recorded in *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne*, *The Death of Percy Reed*, *Brown Adam*, and other pieces. Robin Hood, invoking the Virgin's aid, slays Sir Guy, his ancient foe, cuts off his head, sticks it on his "bowes end," and with an "Irish kniffe" nicks the face beyond recognition: ⁵⁸

He tooke Sir Guys head by the hayre,
And sticked itt on his bowes end:
"Thou hast beene traytor all thy liffe,
Which thing must haue an ende."

Robin pulled forth an Irish kniffe,
And nicked Sir Guy in the fface,
That hee was neuer on a woman borne
Cold tell who Sir Guye was.

⁵² See Scott's full account, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, ed. Henderson, IV, 242 f.

⁵³ No. 214 E 12.

⁵⁴ Cf. F, G, M.

⁵⁵ Child, III, 417.

⁵⁶ No. 177, st. 77.

⁵⁷ " . . . head-hunting and other indications of savage culture did not cease with the advent of civilising influences" (Gomme, *op. cit.*, p. 192)

⁵⁸ No. 118, sts. 41 f.

In *The Death of Percy Reed*, a ballad that records an historical occurrence probably of the sixteenth century, Percy's enemies, not content with giving him "thirty-three" wounds,⁵⁹ mutilate his dead body, hacking off his hands and feet:⁶⁰

They fell upon him all at once,⁶¹
 They mangled him most cruellie;
 The slightest wound might caused his deid,
 And they hae ghen him thirty-three;
 They hackett off his hands and feet,
 And left him lying on the lee.

Are these savage actions to be accredited solely to vengeance, or may there not be an additional motive, that of disabling the ghost of an enemy by mutilating his body?⁶² "Spoiling" an enemy is found in both the *Maidment* and the *Buchan* copy of *Bonny John Seton*, a mediocre piece:⁶³

They took from him his armour clear,⁶⁴
 His sword, likewise his shield;
 Yea, they have left him naked there,
 Upon the open field.

"The laird of the Lag from my faither fled when the Jhohnstones struek of his hand." So reads the Percy version of *Lord Maxwell's Last Goodnight*, an historical piece.⁶⁵ In

⁵⁹ "Thirty-three" or "thirty-and-three" is a popular number in balladry, occurring over fifty times in the Child pieces, often with reference to steeds.

⁶⁰ No. 193 B 30.

⁶¹ Local tradition, according to White, cited by Child, IV, 24 f., preserves the barbarity found in the ballad: "Accordingly the Crosiers instantly put him to death; and so far did they carry out their sanguinary measures, even against his lifeless body, that tradition says the fragments thereof had to be collected together and conveyed in pillow-slips home to Troughend." The omens assigned by tradition to Reed's wife do not appear in the ballad: "His wife had some strange dreams anent his safety on the night before his departure, and at breakfast, on the following morning, the loaf of bread from which he was supplied chanced to be turned with the bottom upwards, an omen which is still accounted most unfavorable all over the north of England"

⁶² On this superstition see Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, I, 451.

⁶³ No. 198 A 12.

⁶⁴ Cf. B 12 f.: "the shoes frae aff his feet," "the garters frae his knee, likewise the gloves upon his hands." The rings would not come off the swelled fingers but they "cutted the grips out o his ears, took out the gowd signots." "The spoiling of John Seaton . . . is not noticed by Gordon and Spalding." (Child, IV, 51.)

⁶⁵ No. 195 A 9. Cf. B 5. On the historicity of the severed hand see Child, IV, 35, citing Spottiswood.

the ballad of *Brown Adam*, a song that bears some resemblance to the Danish piece *Den afhugne Haand* from sixteenth century manuscripts, Adam adds to the ballad lore of the right hand⁶⁶ by cutting off his rival's four fingers as a pledge:⁶⁷

He's gard him leave a better pledge,
Four fingers o his right han.

According to Buchan's copy of this piece, "he's taen anither wad, his sword and his sword-hand."⁶⁸ In *The Twa Knights*, a song with a traditional analogue in Greece,⁶⁹ we learn of a squire who, as proof of his conquest of a lady, takes both her ring and ring-finger.⁷⁰

In the Danish ballad *Sir Buris and Christine* the penalty for adultery is the loss of the eyes, a foot, and the right hand.⁷¹ The mutilation here is not to be matched exactly in English folksong, but a punishment equally horrible and reflecting an ancient penalty for incontinence is recorded in *Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard*, *Old Robin of Portingale*, and *Gil Brenton*. In these pieces, however, the offender is a woman.⁷² The incident under consideration is not, we should point out, to be taken as reflecting a practice of mere ruthless private vengeance but rather as illustrating justice administered in a private way. The punishment inflicted by the

⁶⁶ On the right hand in balladry see *infra*, p. 77 and note 120.

⁶⁷ No. 98 A. 16.

⁶⁸ C 39. Cf. Aberdeenshire text, Greig, *Traditional Ballads*, p. 73: "The neist thing that the knicht he lost was his sword an' his sword-hand."

Cf. the supernatural piece *Sir Cawline* (61, sts. 23, 28). Sir Cawline with an "aukward stroke" took off the elf-king's hand, and then to the king's daughter he presented "the hand, and then the sword"

⁶⁹ No. 268, st. 42; known in Scotland, perhaps, "only through print." (Child, V, 21.)

⁷⁰ The "ring-finger" of the substituted niece, of course.

⁷¹ Translation, Prior, *Ancient Danish Ballads*, II, 109 f.:

Torn from his head were both his eyes
Despite the queen his sister's cries.
They lopp'd him off the stirrup foot,
They lopp'd the dexter hand to boot;

On the foregoing custom as it occurs in other traditions see Prior, *ibid.*, II, 111, and the note, *ibid.*, III, 373, on a similar incident in *Sir Holmer Blaa*. "The loss of a hand and a foot seems to have been the usual penalty demanded for the seduction of a sister."

⁷² "Among the Germans, infidelity on the part of the wife met swift and ruthless punishment, often death." (Gummere, *Germanic Origins*, p. 138.) As illustrative of such punishment Gummere cites our ballad evidence.

injured husband in *Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard* is that of cutting the paps from the breasts of his guilty wife:⁷³

He cuts her paps from off her brest;
Great pity it was to see
That some drops of this ladie's heart's blood
Ran trickling downe her knee.

We cannot agree with Child when he says that "it is an improvement that the lady should die by the stroke of steel as in C, E, H, J, K, L, in exchange for the barbarity of A."⁷⁴ It is noteworthy that this barbarity is approximated in American variants of this ballad.⁷⁵ The stroke of steel may be an improvement where the lady is concerned. As a death-blow it is comparable to the tender mercies of Othello's dagger, but, after all, version A, so far as reflecting actual custom is concerned, may be nearer the truth.

Not appeased by the penalty exacted in the foregoing ballad, the husband in *Old Robin of Portingale* goes further and cuts off the ears of his unfaithful wife:⁷⁶

Hee cutt the papps beside he[r] brest,
And bad her wish her will;
And he cutt the eares beside her heade,
And bade her wish on still.

It is among the "customs" of Gil Brenton's "country" to mete out such punishment to an inconstant wife, and since our hero has wedded "seven king's daughters" we may regard his as a practiced hand:⁷⁷

⁷³ No. 81 A 26.

⁷⁴ *Ballads*, II, 243. Strangely enough, Child is prone to question the validity or naturalness of certain strikingly primitive incidents in our ballads. See, for example, his observation on the blood-drinking in *The Braes o Yarrow* (214), *Ballads*, IV, 162 n. For excellent parallels to this incident see George Henderson, *Survivals in Belief among the Celts*, pp. 29 ff.

⁷⁵ The wife's head is severed or split in twain: *J A F L*, XXX, 309 ff., texts II and III; Campbell and Sharp, *Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, p. 81, text B, p. 87, F; Mackenzie, *The Quest of the Ballad*, p. 17; Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South*, p. 95.

⁷⁶ No. 80, st. 29. Remorseful, Old Robin, by way of penance (st. 32), "shope the crosse in his right sholder, of the white flesh and the redd, and went him into the holy land, whereas Christ was quicke and dead." On this incident and its reflection of general custom see Child, II, 246.

⁷⁷ No. 5 A 15 ff.

" But, bonny boy, tell to me ⁷⁸
 What is the customs o your country."
 " The custom o't, my dame," he says,
 " Will ill a gentle lady please.
 " Seven king's daughters has our king wedded,
 An seven king's daughters has our king bedded.
 " But he's cutted the paps frae their breast-bane,
 An sent them mourning hame again "

Plucking out the eyes of a murderer is the punishment to be inflicted by the two brothers in *Young Benjie* — this by way of avenging the death of their sister: ⁷⁹

" Ye mauna Benjie head, brothers,⁸⁰
 Ye mauna Benjie hang,
 But ye maun pike out his twa grey een,
 And punish him ere he gang "

" The regular penalty for incontinence in an unmarried woman, if we are to trust the authority of romances, is burning," observes Professor Child, and notes that in the southern ballad *Dona Ausenda* the father in person superintends the preparation of the pile.⁸¹ The best instance for British balladry is that given in *Lady Maisry*. A Scotch lass, having gone contrary to the wishes of her relatives in the matter of her betrothal or amour, is accused, condemned, and executed by her relatives. According to certain texts of the ballad, father and brother are the executioners. Sister and mother, in other copies, lend a hand. A Motherwell version reads: ⁸²

Her father is gone to the fire,⁸³
 Her brother to the whin,
 To kindle up a bold bonfire,
 To burn her body in."

According to the Campbell text as well as several other copies of our ballad, the culprit's entire family — father,

⁷⁸ Cf. B 11 ff.

⁷⁹ No. 86 A 20.

⁸⁰ Cf. B 11.

⁸¹ *Ballads*, II, 113 and n.

⁸² No. 65 B 18.

⁸³ Cf. C 12. It should be borne in mind that Maisry's offence consists in part, at least, in her having given her love to an Englishman rather than to a man of her own country. See A 13 f.

mother, sister, brother — take or *have* the law in their own hands. The father orders the "bale-fire":⁸⁴

"O who will put of the pot,⁸⁵
O who will put of the pan?
And who will build a bale-fire,
To burn her body in."

The other members of the household, whether they would or not, must obey this command:

The brother took of the pot,
The sister took of the pan,
And her mother builded a bold bale-fire,⁸⁶
To burn her body in.

In *Sir Aldingar* the queen, falsely accused of infidelity, escapes death at the stake only when her innocence is proved by ordeal of battle.⁸⁷ In *Young Hunting* the ordeal by fire and that of the bleeding corpse serve to discover the murderess.⁸⁸

These matters bid fair to carry us into a study of justice, both private and public, as depicted in balladry, a study which, completely worked out, would be of no mean proportions.⁸⁹ Death at the hands of her brother, whose authority has been slighted, is the fate of the bride in *The Cruel Brother*,⁹⁰ and so of another maiden in the ballad of *Andrew Lammie*. In this latter piece a girl would marry against her relatives' wishes. She is punished by flagellation. The brother, taking his turn after father and mother, deals the deathblow:⁹¹

⁸⁴ D 8.

⁸⁵ The brother alone is judge, jury, and executioner in A 11 ff., 17, 26 ff., but the lover (sts. 30 f.) will take vengeance upon the entire family.

⁸⁶ In E 6 the mother sits in a "golden chair to see her daughter burn," as in F 10. Cf. G 2 f., H 14 ff., I 10, I a b, J 3, K 12. See the "golden chair" test for chastity in *Gil Brenton* (5 A 19, C 31, D 21).

⁸⁷ No. 59 A 14, B 18. A 14: "And brent our queene shalbee." Cf. the Danish ballad *Medelwold and Sidselille*, trans. Prior, *op. cit.*, III, 5, st. 8:

"Then high on gallows hang shall he,
And blaze below the pile for thee."

⁸⁸ No. 68.

⁸⁹ I have drawn out from the ballads all those matters relating to judicial procedure and shall present them in a later study.

⁹⁰ No. 11.

⁹¹ No. 233 A 16. Cf. C 38. See also text, Greig, *Traditional Ballads*, p. 176, st. 38.

Her brother beat her cruellie,
 Till his straits they werena canny;
 He brak her backe, and he beat her sides,
 For the sake o Andrew Lammie.

In the German ballad *Graf Hans von Holstein und seine Schwester Annchristine*, a song with points of resemblance to *Fair Janet*, a girl from whose breasts milk comes is beaten by her brother until liver and lungs spring from her body.⁹²

The Paths to Death. "Of the various paths to death," observes Gummere in his *Germanic Origins*, "old age had the worst adjectives," such as "odious age" in *Beowulf*, and death for the German was "nowhere so dreaded as where it found him in his bed,—the 'straw-death,' as he called it."⁹³ As for "odious age" in balladry the foregoing pages are proof that in Jaques' seven-part drama the hero of folksong seldom lives to play any act beyond that of the lover or that of the soldier. Some few old men there are in balladry, but as a rule they are "silly auld" men,⁹⁴ who not infrequently, however, have something sinister about them. They have a way, like Carl Hood, the ballad representative of Odin,⁹⁵ of coming "for ill, but never for good."⁹⁶ On the whole, they merit the evil wish pronounced by the hero in the fine song of *Johnie Cock*: "Oh wae befa thee, silly auld man, an ill death may thee dee!"⁹⁷

Besides the kinds of death already surveyed in the preceding pages, the ballads picture other stock ways of dying, but death is an experience, the commonplaceness of which, even in folk poetry, does not strip it of terror. Suicide can hardly be styled dishonorable in folksong. It is a matter of frequent occurrence and nowhere does anything of oppro-

⁹² Karl Mullenhof, *Sagen, Marchen und Lieder der Herzogthümer Schleswig-Holstein und Lauenburg*, p. 492, no. 48.

⁹³ Pp. 305 f. See also "Old Age," *Encyc. Religion and Ethics*, IX, 480: Teutonic.

⁹⁴ See, for example, no. 114, D 10 f., 20; E 9 f., G 9. Cf. F 9: "silly auld carle;" H 11 f: "a stane-auld man."

⁹⁵ See Child, *Ballads*, I, 95 n.

⁹⁶ *Earl Brand* (7 A 7).

⁹⁷ No. 114 D 20.

brium seem to attach to the act of self-destruction.⁹⁸ Falling upon one's sword often suffices, as in that song of sworn brotherhood *Bewick and Graham*. Grahame has given his "bully Bewick" a mortal wound but will, in keeping with his vow, "be the first that die." According to the ancient manner, he leaps upon his sword: "⁹⁹

Then he stuck his sword in a moody-hill,
Where he lap thirty good foot and three;
First he bequeathed his soul to God.
And upon his own sword-point lap he.

The "outlyer" brother in a Motherwell copy of *Babylon* rushes upon his knife for reasons even more tragic: ¹⁰⁰

He stuck his knife then into the ground,¹⁰¹
He took a long race, let himself fall on;

And Gil Vielt cannot survive Lady Ingram's preference for her slain husband: ¹⁰²

Gil Vielt took a long brand,
An stroakd it on a stro,¹⁰³
An through and thro his own bodie
He made it come and go.

⁹⁸ On suicide as practiced by the early Teutonic peoples see Gummere, *Germanic Origins*, pp. 203, 232, 306.

⁹⁹ No. 211, st. 48.

¹⁰⁰ No. 14 D 22.

¹⁰¹ Cf. *Little Musgrave* (81 G 32): "He leand the halbert on the ground, the point o't to his breast." So in *Young Johnstone* (88 D 34). See also *Glasgerion* (67 A 23): "He sett the swords poynt till his brest, the pummill till a stone; . . . ;" *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet* 73 A 28, D 18, D e, Child, II, 197). Cf American texts of no. 73: Campbell and Sharp, *Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, pp. 55, 58; Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South*, pp. 45 ff., all texts except F. Cf. British text, Leather, *Folk-Lore of Herefordshire*, p. 202

¹⁰² No. 66 B 19.

¹⁰³ This stroking or whetting of the sword on straw, grass, a stone, or the ground, or wiping or drying it on the sleeve or the grass before using it is a ballad commonplace. For its occurrence see nos. 67 A 22; 69 A 15, C 13, D 8, G 17; 70 B 19; 73 B 36; 83 A 26, F 30; 81 E 18, K 12; 82, st. 15; 90 B 21, C 14, and text, Child, V, 226 f., sts. 8, 21; 99 A 32: "struck it across the plain;" N 28: "oer a stane;" T 11 (Child, IV, 491): "slate it on the plain;" as in text, Child, V, 235, st. 32; 112 A 10, and text, Child, II, 492, sts. 11 f.; 269 D 8. On this commonplace see Child, II, 243 f.

The epithet "wee" that is used in balladry to describe the penknife¹⁰⁴ makes somewhat of a verbal paradox in view of the tragic situations in which this weapon figures. Can "wee pen-knife," as someone has suggested, be a corruption of "weapon knife."¹⁰⁵ According to the Child ballads, the penknife may be "sharp and sma,"¹⁰⁶ "long and sharp,"¹⁰⁷ or "full three quarters long."¹⁰⁸ In folksong the penknife is a woman's as well as a man's weapon.¹⁰⁹ The cruel mother murders her "bonie babe" with her "little pen-knife."¹¹⁰ The brown bride in *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet* takes revenge for the fairness of Annie by means of a little penknife "which she kept secret there."¹¹¹ According to several texts of *The Bonnie Banks o' Fordie*, Baby Lon has taken "out his wee pen-knife, and he's twyned himsel o' his ain sweet life."¹¹² In one version he beheads two of his sisters with this same "diminutive instrument."¹¹³ And the cruel brother, whose consent to his sister's betrothal has not been asked, administers ancient justice by drawing "a little penknife" and

¹⁰⁴ The penknife appears to be an ideal weapon for murder or suicide. See Sidgwick, *Popular Ballads of the Olden Time*, First Series, p. 35. See also Stempel, *A Book of Ballads*, p. 217, on the penknife. "It has been suggested that the undue prominence of wee pen-knives in ballads shows the influence of female tradition."

¹⁰⁵ On the passage in *Beowulf*, 11 2703 f, "war-knife drew, a biting blade by his breastplate hanging," Gummere (*Oldest English Epic*, p. 140) has this note: "In the ballads this useful dagger or short sword is often a 'wee pen-knife that hangs low down by the gare; but the wee penknife now and then is described as 'three-quarters [of a yard] long.'"

¹⁰⁶ No. 49 B 3.

¹⁰⁷ No. 73 D 15.

¹⁰⁸ No. 114 A 8.

¹⁰⁹ Wooing and wedding customs provide the ladies of balladry with this ready weapon. No. 10 H 2, I 3: "He courted the eldest with a penknife." See also nos. 5 A 65, C 74; 10 B, C, D, Q.

¹¹⁰ *The Cruel Mother* (20 B, C, D, E, F, L). The murderous penknife appears in nos. 11 B, G, H, I, L; 14 A, B, C, D, E; 49 B, C; 73 B 32, D 15, D e (Child, II, 197); 16 B 4; 52 B 9; 114 A 8. The foregoing references are, of course, by no means exhaustive. The penknife is retained in American variants. No. 49 in Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, pp. 33 ff.; McGill, *Folk Songs of the Kentucky Mountains*, p. 82; Mackenzie, *Quest of the Ballad*, p. 104. No. 73 in Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, p. 56; Cox, *op. cit.*, pp. 46 ff., A, D, E, F, G, I, B 13. "pocket-knife."

¹¹¹ No. 73 B 32.

¹¹² No. 14 A 18. Cf. B, C, D, E.

¹¹³ C 5, 10.

reaving "the fair maid o her life."¹¹⁴ In the hands of a woman a "bodkin" serves to inflict death in *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet*¹¹⁵ as well as in *Lamkin*.¹¹⁶ One recalls Hamlet's "bare bodkin."

A study of the weapons and armor mentioned in folksong would not be without value, but such an investigation lies outside our present purposes. We cannot refrain, however, from giving in a footnote a list of some of these weapons, a list similar to the catalogue for Eddic poetry in Vigfusson and Powell's *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*.¹¹⁷ "No suffimen," says Aubrey, "is a greater fugator of phantosmes than gunpowder," but fortunately this "fugator" has not put the ballad ghost utterly to flight nor reduced the ballad lord to the level of his meanest retainer. Pistol, powder-horn, long guns, "powther" and lead, are unheard of in the best of our folksongs,¹¹⁸ and have not displaced the "bright brown" swords of the ancient warrior or the "glaive," the "claymore," the "pole-axe," the "broad-mouthed axe," or the bows of yew and the "broode-headed arrow." The swords of balladry retain something still of ancient magic, and when guns do appear, as in *Sir Andrew Barton*, it is English archery that decides the issue.¹¹⁹ But lack of space forbids our dwelling longer on these matters and footnote references must suffice.¹²⁰

¹¹⁴ No. 11 B 11. In F 10 he uses a "dagger;" in A 17 a "knife;" in H and I a penknife again.

¹¹⁵ No. 73 A 25.

¹¹⁶ No. 93 E 11. Cf. D 11: "a silver bolt." In other texts a penknife is used.

¹¹⁷ Vol. II, 700. See also Gummere, *Germanic Origins*, chap. viii.

¹¹⁸ See no. 167 A 43: cannon loaded with "chaine yards nine, besides other great shott lesse and more." See also nos. 178 B 9, C 2, G 3; 182 A 9, B 11; 193 A 5, B 14; 198 A 14; 223, st. 5; 245 C 23; 254 A 17.

¹¹⁹ No. 167.

¹²⁰ "Bright brown" or "brown" swords (on brown and bright swords see Gummere, *Old English Ballads*, p. 345; and Child, V, 319, glossary, "brown sword."): in ballads—Nos. 67 A 22; 80, st. 24; 83 A 26; "nut-brown,"—69 C 13; 112 A 10; "two edged sword,"—88 C 27; "too honde sworde,"—119, st. 26; 185, st. 33; "broad sword,"—99 G 19, 128, st. 10; 133 B 2; 228 C 8; "lang braid-swords,"—103 B 49; "longe sword,"—123 A 9; 159, st. 9; "small sword,"—73 D e 18 (II, 197); see "hand-sword," Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South*, p. 47; "small sword," again, 102 B 14; "basket-hilt sword,"—149 st. 11; "swerd bent,"—121, st. 15; "sword bent in the middle clear," in "the middle brown,"—191 B 11, 12; falchion,—129, st. 46; 136, st. 5;

To return to modes of dying, if the wee penknife and the sword do not offer a way out, poison in various forms is not ineffective. Nor is there in balladry an antidote for or safeguard against it, such as that prescribed in the *Edda*: "And cast a leek in the cup; (For so I know thou never shalt see thy mead with evil mixed)"¹²¹ Our principal poison ballads are *Lord Randal*, *Katharine Jaffray*, with its closing threat, *Prince Robert*, and *Queen Eleanor's Confession*, not to include the measures taken for abortion in *Tam Lin* and *Mary Hamilton*.

"The substitution of some venomous reptile for food, or putting it into liquor, was anciently supposed," observes Sir Walter Scott in his preface to *Lord Randal*, "to be a common mode of administering poison;" And Scott goes on to cite a MS. chronicle of England, according to which the

"halbert,"—81 G 32; 88 D 34; "glaive," 120 A 20; 99 T 11 (IV, 491); 99, st. 22 (V, 235); "claymore,"—222 A 39, 225 B 13, G 9, H 6, 240 A 11; "rapier,"—106, st. 8; 112 C 37; 181 B 3; 207 A 6; 214 A 10, K 4; "spear,"—109 A 36; 158 B 13; 185, st. 39; 162 A 11, "long spear shod with metal free," 167 C 7; "lance,"—129, st. 38; 186, st. 10; 190, st. 38; "launsgay,"—117, st. 134; sword of "fyne collayne,"—161 A 50; sword of "fyn myllan,"—162 A 31, dirk,—49 E 3; 134, st. 53, 228 C 8; "dag-durk,"—4 A 12, dagger,—11 F 10; 149, st. 11; 73 A 27; 118, st. 7; 174, st. 6; "Irish kniffe,"—118, st. 42, "bill,"—136, st. 5; 159, st. 43; 162 A 11; 180, st. 3; "pole-axe,"—116, sts. 25, 89; 208 B 8; "broad-mouthed axe,"—208 I 14; "battell-axe,"—159, st. 39. Bows and arrows: "broode-headed arrow,"—167, st. 56; "browd aros,"—162 A 5; 167 A 56; 115, st. 9; 125, st. 8; 134, st. 17; 139, st. 12; arrow with "swane-feathars,"—162 A 42; with "grey goose-wing,"—162 B 46; 125, st. 8; "steel-headed arrow,"—159, st. 29; "bearing arrow,"—167 A 53; 116, st. 150; 145 B 33; (see glossary, Child, V, 313, "bearing arrow"); "sheaf of arrows,"—114 A 5; see "shaft arrows on the wa,"—189, st. 16; a prize arrow. 117, st. 285,—"shaft of syluer whyte, the hede and the feders of ryche rede golde," see also 152, st. 7; see description of "bowes," "strynges," and "arrowes,"—117, sts. 131, 132; bow with golden string,—114 J 6; bowstrings of silk,—116, st. 83; "long bow,"—125, st. 35; 131, st. 16; 140 B 6; 149, st. 3; bow of yew,—141, st. 7; 114 A 18; bow of "trusti-tree,"—162 A 44; B 45; "benbowe," "bent bow," (see glossary, V, 315),—124 B 5, 114 A 5, J 6, 148, st. 18; cf. commonplace, "bent his bow and swam;" (see Child, V, 474, 1st col.); quarter-staff,—131, st. 18; pike-staff,—126, st. 2; "oken staves,"—137, st. 18; "crab-tree staff,"—127, st. 15; "staffe,"—122 A 7; 125, st. 11. See "browne bill,"—284, st. 9. Armor: Nos. 161 A 51; 186, st. 10; 262, st. 15, 186, st. 17; 187 B 5; 123 B 12, 167, st. 62 (IV, 506); 190, st. 24; 211, st. 22; 179, st. 18; 116, st. 24; 121, st. 15; 136, st. 8; 159, st. 11; 213, st. 16; 243 B 13; 163 A 16; 262, st. 15.

¹²¹ H. A. Bellows, "Sigdrifumol," *The Poetic Edda*, p. 392.

death of King John was brought about by administering to him the venom of a toad.¹²² Whoever may be the agent of the crime in *Lord Randal*,¹²³ the hero comes to his death by eating "eels boild in broo" or a "four-footed fish." Analogues of this ballad are known all over Europe, and in certain of these, as in a Danish parallel, it is clear that originally the fish and eels of the story were a snake served as food.¹²⁴ A Motherwell copy of the British ballad reads:¹²⁵

"What gat ye to your supper, King Henry, my son?
What gat ye to your supper, my pretty little one?"
"I gat fish boiled in broo; mother, mak my bed soon,
For I'm sick to the heart, and I fain wald lie down."

According to nearly all the Child versions, Lord Randal "gat" "eels boiled in broo"¹²⁶ or "a wee fishie;"¹²⁷ in one text, a "speckled trout,"¹²⁸ in another, a "four-footed fish."¹²⁹ The original snake is found in one of the Child texts,¹³⁰ and is clearly implied in another where the "wee fish" was found near "the edder-flowe" or adder morass.¹³¹ The reading is "paddocks" in a copy from the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*.¹³² In one Child text we find a "cup of strong poison,"¹³³ in another, "deadly poison."¹³⁴ When the reading is not corrupt American variants usually have "eels" or "fish."¹³⁵

¹²² *Munstrelys of the Scottish Border*, III, 51 f.

¹²³ On the agent of the crime see Child, I, 154 f.

¹²⁴ Twelve snakes in the Danish analogue, an adder in German F. See analyses of foreign texts, Child, II, 152 ff.

¹²⁵ No. 12 C 2.

¹²⁶ A, C, D, E, G, I, I b c g, P, S.

¹²⁷ B, J, K, K c, O, R.

¹²⁸ L. Cf. N: "spreckled fishie." See descriptions of the fish (eel) in A 3, I 4, O 3, etc.

¹²⁹ M 3.

¹³⁰ I c (Child, I, 166): "dead snake"

¹³¹ U 2 (Child, IV, 450).

¹³² Vol. III, 43.

¹³³ H 2.

¹³⁴ F 2.

¹³⁵ To cite only a few of these: *J A F L*, XVI, 258 ff., "ale" (for eel), "three little silver fishes;" XXIV, 345, "bread, meat, and poison;" Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, p. 23, "cold pie and cold coffee" (probable corruption of "poison" to "pie and"); *ibid.*, p. 25, "cup of cold poison;" Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South*, pp. 23 ff., "eels" in A, B, C, D; "poison" in E. Cf. British texts. *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, V, 118, "wee, wee blue fish;" V, 122, "three drops of strong poison;" IV, 248, Italian version, "leaf of salad."

In the closing lines of *Katharine Jaffray*, the model for Scott's *Lochinvar*, a threat flung at any Southron who would venture to court a Scottish lass, keeps clear the distinction between "fish" and venomous "frogs":¹³⁶

They haik ye up and settle ye by,¹³⁷
Till on your wedding day,
And gie ye frogs instead o fish,
And play ye foul, foul play.

Whether or not the family of folksong may be described as matripotestal,¹³⁸ it is certain that in matters of love the ballad son goes counter at his peril to the wishes of his mother.¹³⁹ Hence Prince Robert, whose marriage has not met with maternal approval, must drink—to a sort of ritualistic doggerel—a cup of poison administered by his mother's hand:¹⁴⁰

He has put it to his bonny mouth,¹⁴¹
And to his bonny chin,
He's put it to his cherry lip,
And sae fast the rank poison ran in.

The foregoing lines occur in the inferior pieces *Lord Thomas and Lady Margaret* and *Lady Isabel*,¹⁴² and represent a ballad commonplace, a "foolish one," thinks Child.¹⁴³

Queen Eleanor's Confession tells a story, known in several sets of tales,¹⁴⁴ of a husband who impersonates a shrift-father in order to hear his wife's confession. Among other things confessed by the queen is that of making a box of "poyson strong, to poyson King Henry," a libelous incident so far as the historical queen is concerned.¹⁴⁵ A broadside version of the ballad reads:¹⁴⁶

¹³⁶ No. 221 A 13.

¹³⁷ Cf. B 17, C 17, D 19, E 20, etc.

¹³⁸ See F. B. Gummere, "The Mother-in-Law," *Kittredge Anniversary Papers*, pp. 15-24.

¹³⁹ See, for example, nos. 215, 216 and note the rôle of the mother in nos. 5, 6.

¹⁴⁰ No. 87 A 5.

¹⁴¹ Cf. B 4, D 5. See also *Lady Alice* (85 B 2).

¹⁴² Nos. 260 A 17, B 16; 261, st. 21. Cf. no. 222 B 9.

¹⁴³ *Ballads*, IV, 431.

¹⁴⁴ See *ibid.*, III, 257 f.

¹⁴⁵ See *ibid.*, III, 257.

¹⁴⁶ No. 156 A 12.

"The next vile thing that ere I did ¹⁴⁷
 To you I'll not deny;
 I made a box of poyson strong,
 To poyson King Henry."

She then confesses that she "poysoned Fair Rosamond, all in fair Woodstock bower." A poem given by Child in the appendix to *King James and Brown* tells of a "posset," a "poysoned thing," that was prepared for another king.¹⁴⁵

The "poisoned lake" of Kinloch's *Babylon* is probably akin to the snake-pen found in the Danish ballad *Karl and Kragelille*,¹⁴⁹ an enclosure, as described by Dr. Prior, "filled with thorns and venomous reptiles, into which criminals, and especially pirates were thrown."¹⁵⁰ Some such punishment must be suffered by the murderer in the British ballad:¹⁵¹

"Then for their life ye sair shall dree;
 Ye sall be hangit on a tree,
 Or thrown into the poisond lake,
 To feed the toads and rattle-snake."

The "poisoned lake" here, thinks Prior, has no reference to the "ancient snake-pen" and betrays its modern origin in the mention of "rattle-snakes."¹⁵² It might as well be said that the "pistol" in an American text of *Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard* betrays the modern origin of the homicide in that piece.¹⁵³ This concludes the matter of death by poisoning unless we choose to make reference to a Norwegian analogue of *Clerk Colvill*, according to which the unwilling lover is given by his elfin sweetheart a drink with an atter-corn, a poison grain, floating in it.¹⁵⁴

Death by drowning occurs in a number of ballads: in *Lady Isabel and the Elf-Knight*, where a clever lass turns the

¹⁴⁷ Cf. B 11: "I keepit poison in my bosom seven years;" also C 11, D 9, E 12, F 16. E 12: "penknife;" F 16: "poisoned a lady of noble blood."

¹⁴⁸ *Op. cit.*, III, 446.

¹⁴⁹ Grundtvig, I, 335.

¹⁵⁰ *Ancient Danish Ballads*, I, 261. For the occurrence of the snake-pen elsewhere see *ibid.*, *ibid.*

¹⁵¹ No. 14 E 18.

¹⁵² *Op. cit.*, I, 262.

¹⁵³ Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

¹⁵⁴ For analyses of this version and other foreign texts in which poison figures see Child, I, 375 and n.

tables on her would-be slayer, who has drowned "seven king's daughters" in the "water o Wearie's Well," that is, the Devil's Well;¹⁵⁵ in *The Twa Sisters*, where a jealous maiden is guilty of sororicide;¹⁵⁶ in *Sir Patrick Spens* and *The Mermaid* as a result of seeing the mermaid — this according to certain texts of the former piece,¹⁵⁷ all of the latter;¹⁵⁸ in *The Lass of Roch Royal*, through the machinations of a witch mother or at least as a consequence of her duplicity.¹⁵⁹ Death by drowning occurs also in *The Water o Gamrie* where, according to three texts, a mother's curse or the absence of her blessing sends the hero to a watery grave.¹⁶⁰ A similar story is told in *The Mother's Malison* with which ought to square those texts in the former piece that send the son away with his mother's blessing rather than with her curse. In *The Mother's Malison* the hero, because he insists on seeing his true-love, receives his mother's curse, and instead of prospering in his suit goes to his death in Clyde's Water:¹⁶¹

"Gin ye winna stay, my son Willie,¹⁶²
 This ae bare night wi me,
 Gin Clyde's water be deep and fu o flood,¹⁶³
 My malisen drown ye!"

The Clyde is popular in balladry.¹⁶⁴ We find it again in *Young Hunting*, a song with several primitive traits. Death here is not by drowning but this piece preserves the superstition that a drowned body may be discovered by means of burning candles, a procedure suggested in the ballad by a talking and helpful bird:¹⁶⁵

"Leave aff your ducking on the day,¹⁶⁶
 And duck upon the night;
 Whear ever that sakeless knight lys slain,
 The candels will shine bright."

¹⁵⁵ No. 4 B 10 ff. Cf. Child's other texts.

¹⁵⁶ No. 10.

¹⁵⁷ No. 58 J, L, P, Q.

¹⁵⁸ No. 289.

¹⁵⁹ No. 76 D 26 ff., E 21 ff., E a 24, and text, Child, IV, 472 f.

¹⁶⁰ No. 215 E 9, F 4, G 2.

¹⁶¹ No. 216 A 6.

¹⁶² Cf. B 4, C 7.

¹⁶³ Cf. the curse in *The Wife of Usher's Well* (79 A.).

¹⁶⁴ It is found, for example, in nos. 9 G; 42 C; 63 B, C, G, J; 68 A, B, C, H, J, K; 91 F, G; 110 B, M, N; 216 A, B, C; 217 L.

¹⁶⁵ No. 68 A 22.

In another ballad of superstition, *Young Benjie*, a lover throws his sweetheart "oer the linn," that is, over the bank into the torrent, where she drowns.¹⁶⁷ In a number of texts of the ballad that bears her name Mary Hamilton throws her newborn babe into the sea, thus furnishing possibly an example of the old custom of infant exposure. This hint of an old custom is noticed by Professor Gummere: "Child-murder led to the death of Russian Mary Hamilton; but the ballad is thinking of the old exposure or 'exposition' of infants."¹⁶⁸ In certain versions Mary kills her babe outright but in one of Scott's texts she sends it afloat upon the sea:¹⁶⁹

"I put it in a bottomless boat¹⁷⁰
And bad it sail the sea."

According to other copies, Mary puts her babe in a "piner-pig,"¹⁷¹ in a basket,¹⁷² or "rows" it in a handkerchief and throws it into the sea.¹⁷³ According to another text, she apparently smothers it.¹⁷⁴ In Maidment's version it is expressly said that she strangles it.¹⁷⁵

Death by strangulation occurs in several ballads. In the Harris Manuscript of *The Cruel Mother* the murderess strangles her babes:¹⁷⁶

¹⁶⁶ On this incident see Child, II, 142.

¹⁶⁷ No. 86 A, B.

¹⁶⁸ *Old English Ballads*, p. 335. See also the same author, *The Popular Ballad*, p. 242. In his essay on the mother-in-law in the English ballads (*Kittredge Anniversary Papers*, p. 17 n.) Gummere takes note of the proportion in popular poetry of many brothers, often seven, to one sister, the "ae sister," as in *Clerk Saunders* (69 A 10). "This 'ae sister' with many brothers," observes Gummere, "may dimly recall the times when exposure of female infants (the *Gunnlaugssaga* was contemporary with the last of the practice) made the proportion. The stories of naval foundlings began in that stage of culture; and of course the example of a husband preferred to brothers was set by the new and prevalent version of the *Nibelungenlied*."

¹⁶⁹ Y 5 (Child, IV, 512).

¹⁷⁰ Cf. U 14 (Child, IV, 509): "I pat that bonny babe in a box, and set it on the sea; o sink ye, swim ye, bonny babe! Ye's neer get mair o me."

¹⁷¹ B 7. an earthen vessel for keeping money

¹⁷² S 3 (Child, IV, 508).

¹⁷³ C 4, D 9, I 7, K 4, O 3, X 4.

¹⁷⁴ E 9: "between the bolster and the bed." Found beneath the bed: L 4, T 5, V 3, W 7.

¹⁷⁵ M 4: "there strangled lay, a lovely baby sweet."

¹⁷⁶ No. 20 J 2. Cf. American text, Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, p. 20: binds them with her yellow hair but kills them with a penknife.

She taen the ribbon frae her head,
An hankit their necks till they waur dead.

According to all copies of *The Laird of Wariston*, a ballad that rests on fact, the lord is killed by strangulation — the lady and the nurse committing the deed in two texts,¹⁷⁷ the nurse alone in one version,¹⁷⁸ with the foul fiend himself in the best copy personally knotting the tether.¹⁷⁹ In one version of *The Braes o Yarrow* the heroine commits suicide by strangling herself with her long hair.¹⁸⁰

Not out of place among other matters associated with death in balladry is the remarkable use to which hair is put in *The Braes o Yarrow* and *Rare Willie Drowned in Yarrow*. In the former of these pieces, the Murison Manuscript, the heroine ties her hair about her slain lover and carries him home. Long hair is put to similar uses elsewhere in popular song, in foreign analogues, for example, of *Lady Isabel and the Elf-Knight*¹⁸¹ or in a Slovak ballad affiliated with *The Maid Freed from the Gallows*.¹⁸² *The Braes o Yarrow* reads:¹⁸³

She's taen three lachters o her hair,
That hung doon her side sae bonny,
An she's tied them roon his middle tight,
An she's carried him hame frae Yarrow.

According to several texts, the hair is the man's, not the maiden's, and, as Miss Gilchrist observes, speaking of Veitch's text,¹⁸⁴ this is probably the "earlier and more likely form of the incident." Miss Gilchrist explains this reversal of the sexes by saying that "when men ceased to wear long hair . . . this attraction was transferred to the lady instead."¹⁸⁵ Professor Child's synopsis of the various textual readings may be given: "Her hair is five quarters long; she twists it round his hand and draws him home, C; ties it round

¹⁷⁷ No. 194 A, B.

¹⁷⁸ C 11.

¹⁷⁹ A 7.

¹⁸⁰ No. 214 A 15.

¹⁸¹ See Child, I, 40 b, 486 b.

¹⁸² See *ibid.*, III, 516 b.

¹⁸³ No. 214 B 14.

¹⁸⁴ L 14. Cf. J 16, K 12.

¹⁸⁵ *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, V, 116.

his middle and carries him home, D. She takes three lachters of her hair, ties them tight round his middle and carries him home, B. *His* hair is five quarters long! she ties it to her horse's mane and trails him home, K.¹⁸⁶ The carrying strikes one as unpractical, the trailing as barbarous. In L, after the lover is slain, the surviving lords and her brother trail him by the heels to Yarrow water and throw him into a whirlpool.¹⁸⁷ . . . His hair, which we must suppose to float, is five quarters long; she twines it round her hand and draws him out."¹⁸⁸ Harp or fiddle strings are made from a drowned maiden's hair in *The Twa Sisters* and reveal or denounce the murderess.¹⁸⁹

It may not be amiss to include here a barbarous practice depicted in certain versions of *Young Beichan*. The hero of our song wandered to "strange countries," and was "taen by a savage Moor, who handld him right cruely":

For thro his shoulder he put a bore,¹⁹⁰
 An thro the bore has pitten a tree,
 An he's gard him draw the carts o wine,
 Where horse and oxen had wont to be.

According to an old tradition in Liddesdale, Lord Soulis—the Lord Soulis of the ballad of that name—"put bores in the shoulders of his vassals, the better to yoke them to the sledges, wherewith they dragged forward materials for

¹⁸⁶ At this point Child (IV, 162 n.) has this note: "The reciters of A and J, whether they gave what they had received, or tried to avoid the material difficulties about the hair, graze upon absurdity. Her hair was three quarters long, she tied it round 'her' (for his?) white hause-bane—and died, A 15. His hair was three quarters long, she's wrapt it round her middle—and brought it home, J 16. The hair comes in again in the next two ballads, and causes difficulty. Wonderful things are done with hair in ballads and tales."

¹⁸⁷ The drowning incident in this text belongs, thinks Child (IV, 162 f.), with the following ballad, no. 215.

¹⁸⁸ *Ballads*, IV, 162 f. See also *ibid.*, IV, 179, for Child's analysis of the similar incident in no. 215.

¹⁸⁹ No. 10.

¹⁹⁰ No. 53 A 2.

¹⁹¹ As in B, D, E, H, I, and two other texts, Child, IV, 461; V, 218. Cf. L 3. "chained all by the middle" to a "tree" that grew in the prison. Cf. American variants: *J A F L*, XXVIII, 149 ff., Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, pp. 38, 42; Pound, *American Ballads and Songs*, p. 33. According to the foregoing variants, Beichan is bound or nailed fast unto a tree. On this incident in American texts see Kittredge, *J A F L*, XXX, 295. Cf. text, Greig, *Traditional Ballads*, p. 41: "put him in a vault o stone."

building the castle. This account of ancient feudal custom, strange to say, is not quite singular. The same occurs in the ballad of 'Young Beichan.'"¹⁹² Of American texts that I have examined those recorded in Dr. J. H. Cox's *Folk-Songs of the South* have best preserved the incident in question.¹⁹³

Lines from *Jellon Grame* may serve to bring to a close our chapter of horrors. Lillie Flower, with "bairn" to Jellon, goes to "Silver Wood" to meet her lover, only to find that he has made for her a grave beneath a green oak tree. Lillie pleads for mercy but Jellon slays her for fear that her father will, through the birth of the child, learn of their illicit love. The babe is born at the moment of the mother's death and lies "weltring in her blude":¹⁹⁴

He felt nae pity for that ladie,¹⁹⁵
 Tho she was lying dead;
 But he felt some for the bonny boy,
 Lay weltring in her blude.

¹⁹² John Leyden, *Poems and Ballads*, p. 217. See Scott, *Minstrelsy*, IV, 224 and n.

¹⁹³ See pp. 36 ff.: A 3, B 3, C 3. A 3 reads: "Through his left shoulder a hole they bore, and through the same a rope was tied, and he was made to drag cold iron, till he was sick and like to died."

¹⁹⁴ No. 90 A 14. Cf. no 81 F 25, K 13.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. B 10: "lay swathed amang her bleed;" C 15: "lay spartling by her side." According to D, Jellon slays the babe also.

And he's taen the baby out of her womb
 And thrown it upon a thorn.

With the foregoing incident compare stanza of an old ballad from Cunningham's recollection (Child, I, 226):

He took the babe on his spear point,
 And threw it upon a thorn.

Cf. the incident in *Captain Car* (178 C 18 ff.).

II

THE ORDEAL AND THE GALLOWS TREE

Properly to be treated only in an exhaustive study of justice, both private and collective, as reflected in British balladry, the ordeal and modes of capital punishment will be considered here chiefly as they bear upon the general subject of death and as they illustrate the more or less primitive and barbarous customs encountered in folksong.

The Ordeal. If we include certain of their foreign analogues, the British ballads exemplify several types of the ordeal, a form of judgment that has its origin in a remote heathendom.¹ In the following survey we shall encounter the ordeal by fire, the ordeal of the bier or the bleeding-corpse, the ordeal by battle, and a special kind of test by the dance in the ballad of *Fair Janet*, particularly as portrayed in Norse versions of this ballad.²

"The ancient ceremony or ordeal of passing through a fire or leaping over burning brands," observes Tylor, "has been kept up so vigorously in the British Isles, that Jamieson's derivation of the phrase 'to haul over the coals' from this rite appears in no way far-fetched."³ Fortunately, the ballad evidence does not rest on a mere phrase. Young Hunting has been slain by his jilted mistress, who, when the "wyte" or blame is put on her, accuses May Catheren. By the *judicium ignis* the crime is fixed upon the real culprit:⁴

O thay ha sent aff men to the wood
To hew down baith thorn an fern,
That they might get a great bonfire
To burn that lady in.

"Put na the wyte on me," she says,
"It was her May Catheren."

¹ Jacob Grimm, *Deutsche Rechtsalterthumer*, 909.

² In citing foreign analogues I shall refer the reader directly to Child's analyses of these pieces, analyses which, for our purpose, are more serviceable than the best translations or than the original transcripts since they carry with them Child's observations and conclusions.

³ *Primitive Culture*, I, 85, citing Jamieson, *Scottish Dictionary*.

⁴ *Young Hunting* (68 A 25 ff.).

Whan thay had tane her May Catheren,
 In the bonfire set her in;
 It wad na take upon her cheeks,
 Nor yet upon her chin,
 Nor yet upon her yallow hair,
 To healle the deadly sin.

Out they hae tain her May Catheren,⁵
 And they hay put that lady in;
 O it took upon her cheek, her cheek,
 An it took on her chin,
 An it took on her fair body,
 She burnt like hoky-gren.

"But it tuke on the cruel hands that pat Young Redin in," is the reading in the Kinloch text.⁶ In Faroese and Icelandic analogues of *Sir Aldingar* the heroine, in order to exonerate herself from the charge of incontinence, resorts to the trial by fire, the particular procedure of which is walking on hot steel and carrying hot iron.⁷ In the Danish ballad *Ordeal by Fire* a maiden frees herself from a similar charge by means of a like *judicium dei*:⁸

His trulove rais'd that cruel knight,¹⁰
 And on the faggots laid;
 The flame shrunk back, and left unscath'd
 The good and gentle maid.

There, as amid the fire she stood,
 Aloud fair Kirstin cried;
 "Believe you now, my father dear,
 How much on me they lied?"

⁵ Virtually the same reading occurs in J 29, K 38

⁶ B 23. Cf. C 24 f.

⁷ No. 59.

⁸ See analyses, Child, II, 36, 38, 40.

⁹ Translation, Prior, *Ancient Danish Ballads*, II, 60.

¹⁰ On the occurrence of the ordeal by fire in chronicle and literature see Prior, *ibid.*, II, 56 ff. Child (*Ballads*, II, 37 ff., 43 f.) notes its occurrence in the legendary history of St. Cunigund, whose story, by reason of similarity in names, has probably been attached to Gunhild, wife of the Emperor Henry III. Malmesbury's account of Gunhild has many points in common with our ballad [*Sir Aldingar*], both in its Norse and British variants. A still earlier account of such a miraculous exoneration is given of Richarda, wife of the Emperor Charles III, 887. Arthurian romance yields an example when Arthur's queen, to clear herself from the suspicion of wrongdoing, says that she is ready to be thrown into a fire of thorns by way of testing the verity of the charge.

According to a Faroese version of *Sir Aldingar*, the suspected lady is vindicated not only through the trial by fire but through the ordeal by water also, tests met with in the Spanish prose romance of Oliva and the French *chanson de geste* of Doon l'Alemanz.¹¹ This trial by water recalls that description of a heathen ordeal in Eddic poetry where Gudrun purges herself from the charge of incontinence: "She dipped her white hand to the bottom [of the cauldron] and took out the precious stones. 'See now, men, how the cauldron boils! I am proved guiltless according to the holy custom.' Atli's heart laughed in his breast when he saw Gudrun's hands whole. 'Now Herkia must go to the cauldron, she that imputed guilt to Gudrun.'"

"He has never seen a pitiful sight that did not see how Herkia's hands were scalded that day. They led the maid to a foul slough."¹²

The British ballad of *Sir Aldingar*, in keeping with its Norse cousins under the title *Ravengaard og Memering*,¹³ puts the queen's honor to trial by means of judicial combat or the ordeal by battle. Accused of unchastity by the false steward, the queen demands the trial of battle to vindicate her innocence:¹⁴

"Seeing I am able noe battell to make,¹⁵
You must grant me, my leege, a knight,
To fight with *that* traitor, Sir Aldingar,
To maintaine me in my right."

"I'lle giue thee forty dayes," said our king,
"To seeke thee a man therin;
If thou find not a man in forty dayes,
In a hott fyer thou shall brenn."

¹¹ Cited by Child, II, 40.

¹² Vigfusson-Powell, *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, I, 322 f.

¹³ Grundtvig, no. 13. See Child's excellent abstract of the Danish and Norwegian songs, *Ballads*, II, 34 ff.

¹⁴ No. 59 A 23 f.

¹⁵ Cf. B 19 ff.

As the story goes, the queen finds her champion and is completely exonerated.¹⁶ In another British song James Hatley proves himself guiltless of theft by overthrowing his accuser in combat.¹⁷

The ordeal of the bier or the bleeding-corpse, known in Germany as the *bahr-recht*,¹⁸ is found in the *Nibelungenlied* when the wounds of the dead Siegfried break open at the approach of Hagen.¹⁹ It furnishes a dramatic incident in Shakespeare's *Richard III*,²⁰ and formerly it played a part in criminal trials.²¹ In balladry it is strikingly illustrated by *Young Hunting* where it precedes the ordeal by fire. "That the body of a murdered man will emit blood upon being touched, or even approached, by the murderer is a belief of ancient standing, and evidence of this character was formerly admitted in judicial investigations."²² According to the Kinloch and the Harris text of our ballad, the mere approach of the murderess produces the effect that Gloucester's presence has upon dead Henry's wounds:²³

O white, white war his wounds washen,
As white as a linen clout;
But as the traitor she cam near,
His wounds they gushit out.

"It's surely been my bouer-woman,
O ill may her betide!
I neer wad slain him Young Redin,
And thrown him in the Clyde."

But the bower-woman, falsely accused by her mistress, is completely vindicated in the succeeding ordeal by fire. "But

¹⁶ Child (II, 37, 39) cites other accounts of exculpation by means of battle or duel, accounts both historical and traditional, among them that given in an early French metrical life of Edward the Confessor, "translatée de Latin," and that related of Gundeberg, wife of the Lombard king Arioald, circa 630.

¹⁷ No. 244 A, B, C.

¹⁸ See Scott, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, ed. T. F. Henderson, III, 241. Scott cites instances from the Scottish criminal courts, "at the short distance of one century."

¹⁹ Karl Bartsch, II. 1043-45.

²⁰ Act I 2.

²¹ See Pitcairn, *Criminal Trials in Scotland*, III, 182-99; William Henderson, *Folk-Lore of the Northern Counties*, p. 57; Crawley, "Ordeal," *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, IX, 582.

²² Child, *Ballads*, II, 143. See also *ibid.*, IV, 468 a.

²³ No. 68 B 21 f.

sune's the traitor stude afore, then oot the red blude sprang." So reads the Harris copy.²⁴ In Scott's version the corpse is touched by both women:²⁵

The maiden touchd the clay-cauld corpse,
A drap it never bled;
The ladye laid her hand on him,
And soon the ground was red.

Is some sort of test or ordeal to be inferred from an incident preserved by a Motherwell version of *The Twa Sisters*? The Miller has brought the maiden's drowned body to dry land. He then lays it on a "brume buss to dry, to see what was the first wad pass her by":²⁶

He laid her on a brume buss to dry,²⁷
To see wha was the first wad pass her by.

This is perhaps in keeping with the many superstitions having to do with certain effects associated with the first person, animal, or thing that one encounters.

When compared with foreign pieces, Norse, German, Breton, and Magyar, with which it has points in common, the ballad of *Fair Janet* is found to preserve a peculiar kind of test, a sort of ordeal by dancing, the idea being to prove whether or not the young woman of the story has borne a child. It should be observed that according to the foreign ballads as well as the Scottish piece the young lady is required, in the course of the story, to take a journey on horseback, a ride which she is especially ill fitted to undergo, and which in the best preserved of the German versions is actually designed as a test.²⁸ Before quoting the British ballad it will be well to give Professor Child's synopsis of the Norse texts of the related piece, *Kong Valdemar og hans Söster*: "According to the Scandinavian story, a king is informed by his queen, her inexorable enemy, that Kirstin, his sister, has just borne a child. The king sends for Kirstin, who is at some

²⁴ C 23.

²⁵ J 28.

²⁶ No. 10 F 16.

²⁷ Cf. G 12 f.: "They have tane her out till yonder thorn, and she has lain till Monday morn."

²⁸ See Child, II, 102.

distance, to come to him immediately. She is obliged to make the journey on horseback. Upon her arrival the king puts her to a variety of tests, among these a long dance. Kirstin comes off so well that her brother says the queen has belied her. The queen then bares Kirstin's breast and makes milk flow from it. The king hereupon sends for heavy whips, and flogs his sister to the point of death. In the Icelandic and Faroe versions Kirstin dies of the dance, in her brother's arms. In the Swedish versions and in Danish I the king is Kirstin's father, not her brother. . . . In Swedish A Kirstin dances with four, dances with five, dances with all the men of the court, and in Swedish C, H she tires out successfully all the courtiers, the king, and the queen."²⁹

In all those versions of *Fair Janet* in which the dance occurs, it is clearly a test. In all but one copy, the heroine, suspected and even accused of having borne a bairn, is asked to dance by various members of the wedding party — by her brothers, her father, the bridegroom man, and by the bridegroom himself. She makes excuses to all but will dance with Willie, her true-love, though her heart should break in three. Her loathness to dance is of course significant in view of the probationary character of the ceremony. In Buchan's copy she asks: ³⁰

‘Is there nae ane amang you a’
Will dance this dance for me?’

Good reason she has to ask for a substitute. In this same copy the dance is called a “shamefu reel.” ³¹ The accusation ³² and the test are given in Herd's copy as follows: ³³

O then spake the norland lord,
And blinkt wi his ee:
‘I trow this lady's born a bairn,’
Then laucht loud laughters three.

²⁹ For abstracts of the incident in the German, Breton, and Magyar pieces see Child, II, 102 f

³⁰ No. 64 F 29

³¹ St. 28: “the first reel that is danced with the bride, her maiden, and two young men; called the Shame Spring or Reel, because the bride chooses the tune. Buchan.” (Child, V, 373.)

³² See A 22, C 14, D 10, E 11, F 25.

And up then spake the brisk bridegroom,
 And he spake up wi pryde:
 'Gin I should pawn my wedding-gloves,
 I will dance wi the bryde.'

'Now had your tongue, my lord,' she said,
 'Wi dancing let me be;
 I am sae thin in flesh and blude,
 Sma dancing will serve me.'

But she's taen Willie be the hand,
 The tear blinded her ee:
 'But I wad dance wi my true-luve,
 But bursts my heart in three.'

It is noteworthy that in two texts of this piece the accused attempts to clear herself by an oath. In still another copy her lover swears for her. In the two former texts the oath precedes the dance, which does not occur at all in the latter version. The Kinloch copy reads: ³⁴

O whan they cam to Merrytown,
 And lighted on the green,
 Monie a bluidy aith was sworn
 That our bride was wi bairn.

Out and spake the bonny bride,
 And she swore by her fingers ten: ³⁵
 'If eer I was wi bairn in my life,
 I was lighter sin yestreen.'

Speaking of the trial by battle, Gummere says respecting the oath and the ordeal: "Oaths, too, must have been taken, along with an appeal to heaven, when the combat was of a judicial nature. In Scandinavia, the accused as well as the accuser grasped the holy ring stained with sacrificial blood, and made oath; while a late survival caused the same persons to swear upon the boar's head." "It is not impossible that

³³ C 14 ff.

³⁴ E 11 f.

³⁵ Cf. F 26 f., G 11 F 26. "She's taen out a Bible braid, and deeply has she sworn;" G 11: here Willie takes the oath—"And Wilhe swore a great, great oath, and he swore by the thorn, that she was as free o a child that night as the night that she was born"

in *Fair Janet* there is some such relation between the swearing and the probation by dancing.³⁷

This is not the place to discuss the various other tests found in balladry, many of them designed to try or prove a woman's virtue. Such a probation occurs in the old ballad of *Gil Brenton*, where the king's mother, with authority enough to furnish a good argument for the matripotestal family, superintends the ceremony of putting her son's successive wives to a "golden chair" test. In the golden chair none but a maiden will sit until bidden.³⁸ Blankets and sword play a similar rôle in another copy of this piece, and in *The Boy and the Mantle* the wearing of a magic mantle, the carving of a "bores head," and drinking from a horn, serve as divinatory means to prove who among the lords and knights is a "cuckolde."³⁹ Standing on a stone, in *Willie o Winsbury*, is designed as a test whereby a father inquires into the progress of a daughter's amour.⁴⁰ In *Hund Horn* a magic ring by changing color indicates the infidelity of Horn's mistress.⁴¹ But these are matters to be treated more in full in a study of marriage customs as illustrated by popular poetry, a study which must take into account not only the foregoing instances but many other examples of the

³⁶ *Germanic Origins*, p. 301. See also "Ordeal," *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, IX, 507 ff.

³⁷ British balladry instances a great many oaths, some of them of an ancient and primitive character. Swearing by the hilt of the sword, "bright bronde," or top of spear: nos. 156 C 5; 199 B 4, C 7; 200 A 5, C 7; 117, st. 202. More primitive yet, such as oaths by oak, ash, thorn, grass, corn, etc.: nos. 64 G 11; 67 A 18; 68 A 16, K 26; 11 L 18; 142 A 4; 68 D 21, G 7, 147, st. 21. Oaths by sun, moon, stars, mould, etc.: nos. 44, st. 4, 110 E 10; 35, st. 8; 68 A 17; 110 E 12; 200 B 9, 17; 156 F 6; 99, st. 3 (Child, V, 234). Swearing by the body or parts of the body: nos. 64 E 12, and text (Child, IV, 465); 104 B 2, 3; 140 A 17, B 7, 15; 145 A 24; 149, st. 33; 161 A 16; 186, st. 7; 176, st. 6; 190, st. 31. Swearing by the truth of the right hand, as in no. 100 A, is a ballad commonplace. Swearing by the Bible, the book, a "bok": nos. 64 F 26; 92 A 6; 109 A 25, B 26; 138, st. 13; 271 A 73. Swearing by the Deity, the Virgin Mary, by Him that died on tree, etc.: nos. 9 C 4; 116, st. 146; 165, st. 8; 48, st. 15, 39 B 20; 80, st. 14; 177, st. 359; 305 A 6; 116, st. 60; 305 B 17; 89 A 32; 21 A 7; 159, st. 38, 116, st. 155; 80, st. 8; 142 A 2; 156 E 6, 7.

³⁸ No. 5 A 19, C 31, D 17.

³⁹ No. 29, sts. 9 ff., 37 ff., 43 ff.

⁴⁰ No. 100 A 4.

⁴¹ No. 17 A, B, C, etc. Cf. *Bonny Bee Hom* (92 A, B).

chastity test noted by Professor Child in connection with British folksong.⁴²

Capital Punishment. British folksong furnishes an imposing catalogue of crimes and punishments, a catalogue more extensive than that made by F. York Powell for Eddic poetry,⁴³ and comparable to that given by Gummere for the early Germans,⁴⁴ and even paralleling pretty closely any list that might be made for primitive society in general.⁴⁵ Severing the head, the hands, the feet, the ears, cutting out the heart, the tongue, and cutting off the breasts, plucking out the eyes and hacking the face, as well as burning, strangulation, and drowning, have been surveyed as acts of individual retaliation or as growing out of the blood-feud. In the present section we shall be concerned with collective rather than private vengeance.

The unusual punishments of half-hanging, quartering, seething in boiling lead, cutting the joints asunder, occur, along with burning, in *The Lord of Lorn and the False Steward*, a ballad founded, it seems, on the romance of Roswall and Lillian, which, in turn, belongs with a group of popular tales represented by the Grimms' *Goose Girl*.⁴⁶ Having personated the Lord of Lorn, the false steward merits a traitor's death:⁴⁷

First they tooke him and h[a]ngd him halfe,
And let him downe before he was dead,
And quartered him in quarters many,
And sodde him a boyling lead.

⁴² See *Ballads*, V, 472, at "Chastity."

⁴³ Vigfusson-Powell, *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, II, 700 "Execution."

⁴⁴ *Germanic Origins*, pp. 298 ff.

⁴⁵ See J. A. MacCulloch, "Crimes and Punishments," *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, IV. "Methods of death vary; they include decapitation, strangulation, hanging, stabbing or spearing, cudgelling or flagellation, empalement, crucifixion, drowning, burning, flaying alive, burying alive, throwing from a height, sending the criminal to sea in a leaky canoe, cutting in two, lopping off the limbs."

One may consult the evidence surveyed in the present study to see how closely in these matters folksong parallels primitive practices.

⁴⁶ See Child, *Ballads*, V, 42 ff.

⁴⁷ No. 271 A 103 f. Cf. B 59: half hanging and boiling in molten lead.

And then they tooke him out againe,
 And cutten all his ioyntes in sunder,
 And burnte him eke vpon a hyll;
 I-wis thé did him curstlye cumber

In *Lamkin* the homicide is punished by being boiled in lead: ⁴⁸

And Rankin was boiled ⁴⁹
 in a pot full of lead.

Death by boiling appears "to have been in use among the English at a very late period." ⁵⁰

Tearing by wild horses is a punishment mentioned in *Young Johnstone* and *Child Owlet*. The former piece reads: ⁵¹

"To be torn at the tail o wild horses
 Is the death I weet ye'll die"

Child Owlet's unmerited death is given in gruesome detail; a single stanza may be quoted: ⁵²

They put a foal to ilka foot,
 And ane to ilka hand,
 And sent them down to Darling muir,
 As fast as they coud gang

"Rolling in a spiked barrel is well known as a popular form of punishment," remarks Child in his introduction to *The Laird of Wariston*, and cites its occurrence in balladry, romance, and *Marchen*.⁵³ Wariston's lady has strangled her lord, and at the command of her father — a matter worthy of note — is ordered to be rolled in a "barrel o pikes": ⁵⁴

Word has gane to her father, the grit Dunipace,
 And an angry man was he;
 Cries, Gar mak a barrel o pikes,
 And row her down some lea!

⁴⁸ No. 93 D 30.

⁴⁹ Cf. I 14: "And the fause nourice burnt in the caudron was she." Cf. text, Child, V, 230, sts 13 f.

⁵⁰ Scott, *Minstrelsy*, IV, 244, citing Stowe's *Chronicle*. See also Child, II, 321 n., on boiling to death as a penalty for coiners and poisoners.

⁵¹ No 88 D 13.

⁵² No. 291, st. 10.

⁵³ *Op cit.*, IV, 30 n.

⁵⁴ No. 194 B 8.

In a Norse analogue of *Young Waters*,⁵⁵ a Percy ballad, an innocent knight is rolled down a hill in a tun set with knives,⁵⁶ and according to the Grimms' story *Die Gänsemagd*, which has affiliations with *The Lord of Lorn*, a maiden is dragged through the streets in a similarly contrived instrument of torture.⁵⁷

Burning as a punishment for unchastity is found in *Lady Maisry* and *Sir Aldingar*, ballads considered earlier in this study.⁵⁸ This type of punishment is suggested or actually carried out in still other pieces: *The Twa Sisters*,⁵⁹ *Edward*,⁶⁰ *Young Hunting*,⁶¹ *Lamkin*,⁶² *The Laird of Wariston*,⁶³ and *Child Owlet*.⁶⁴ It should be observed that with the exception of the victim in *Child Owlet* the culprit in all these pieces, as in *Lady Maisry*, is a woman, the crime being that of homicide, save in *Lady Maisry* and *Sir Aldingar*. In this last-named piece the queen escapes Lady Maisry's death at the stake only by the ordeal of battle. The wicked stepmother in *The Laily Worm and the Machrel of the Sea* is burned for witchcraft:⁶⁵

He has sent to the wood
For whuns and for hawthorn,
An he has taen that gay lady,
An there he did her burn.

The burning of the false nurse, the mason's abettor in *Lamkin*, will be considered shortly in connection with the place of execution. "Put my mantle oer my head," pleads the

⁵⁵ No. 94.

⁵⁶ Grundtvig, III, 691, no. 178. See Child, II, 343. Translated, Prior, *Ancient Danish Ballads*, II, 163, st. 22. Cf. a German ballad, Hoffman, *Niederlandische Volkslieder*, p. 19, trans. Prior, *op cit.*, II, 243: "But hanging they deem'd not pain enough, would wring him with sevenfold torture more: in spikeset barrel they closed him up," Then "three days they were rolling him to and fro."

⁵⁷ See Child, V, 48.

⁵⁸ *Supra*, pp. 20 f.

⁵⁹ No. 10 V 23 and text, Child, IV, 449.

⁶⁰ No. 13 A 12: "fire o coals to burn her."

⁶¹ No. 68.

⁶² No. 93.

⁶³ No. 194 A 9.

⁶⁴ No. 291, st. 8.

⁶⁵ No. 36, st. 15.

murderess in *The Laird of Wariston*, "for the fire I downa see."⁶⁶

"The punishment of the gallows," observes Gummere, "was widely used by our earliest ancestors, and finds a varied expression in the older literature,—chiefly in Scandinavian poetry. It was by no means so ignoble an exit from life as it is now, and indicated no absolute disgrace like the vile indignities of the hurdle and the swamp."⁶⁷ The gallows-tree or simply "tree" offers, with the exception of the sword, the most common exit from life so far as the ballads are concerned. "Gallage-tree," "gallou-tree," or "galla-tree,"⁶⁸ it may be called, but there are no picturesque circumlocutions for it such as are found in old Norse poetry: "wolf-tree," "high-shouldered flax-steed," or "corse-ridden steed of Wingi."⁶⁹ Nor can we find in our ballads a parallel for Odin's self-related experience of hanging on the gallows-tree nine whole nights,⁷⁰ a possible Norse version of the Crucifixion.

Robin Hood, his noble master, says Will Stutly, "nere had man that yet was hangd on the tree."⁷¹ But death by hanging, actually put into effect, threatened, or at least bequeathed in dying testaments, occurs in many songs. The malefactor may be man or women, the crimes, poisoning, drowning, infanticide, homicide in other forms, stealing the king's deer, and adultery, not to extend the list.

Not according to the ballad, but as Bishop Lesley relates it, John Armstrong with forty-eight of the most notable thieves — marauders of the Scottish marches — were, without judicial process, all hanged upon growing trees.⁷² Babylon, guilty of sororicide, has the choice of being "hangit on a tree," or of being thrown into a poisoned lake.⁷³ The clerks two sons of Owsenford, in the ballad of that name, offenders in an unhappy amour, are hanged on a tree:⁷⁴

⁶⁶ No. 194 A 9.

⁶⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 240.

⁶⁸ See Child, V, 337. "Gallow-tree."

⁶⁹ Vigfusson-Powell, *op. cit.*, I, 56, 247, 252.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, I, 24.

⁷¹ No. 141, st 19.

⁷² John Lesley, *The History of Scotland*, p. 143.

⁷³ No. 14 E 18.

⁷⁴ No. 72 A 13.

O he's taen out these proper youths,⁷⁷
And hangd them on a tree.

The "tree" here may, perhaps, be taken literally and not as meaning the usual gallows structure.⁷⁸

To her brother, from whose knife she has got her death stroke, the maiden in *The Cruel Brother* wills to her murderer the "gallows-tree,"⁷⁷ "gallows-pin,"⁷⁸ "rope and gallows,"⁷⁹ or "the highest gallows."⁸⁰ In similar fashion, Lord Randal wills to his poisoner, "tow and halter for to hang on yon tree,"⁸¹—a clear case of hanging on trees—"the highest hill to hang her on,"⁸² "gallows and plenty to hang her,"⁸³ "a halter to hang her,"⁸⁴ "gallows tree,"⁸⁵ "high, high gallows."⁸⁶ Speaking through a harp, viol, or fiddle, made from her body, a drowned maiden demands that her murderess be hanged.⁸⁷

Marriage with the maiden he has wronged, or death on the gallows tree, is, by royal mandate, the only choice left Sweet William in *The Knight and Shepherd's Daughter*:⁸⁸

'O whether will ye marry the bonny may,⁸⁹
Or hang on the gallows-tree?'

In this text, as in others, there is no way out but hanging, in case William is a "married man."⁹⁰

For the crime of infanticide, Mary Hamilton must mount the gallows stair, a fate which, with death upon her, she describes in poetic lines: "this gallows tree to tread," "tread this gallows stair," "the gallows-tows to wear," the

⁷⁵ Cf. D 9: "Both hanging on the tree."

⁷⁶ On hanging on trees see Gummere, *op. cit.*, pp. 240 f.

⁷⁷ No. 11 A 25, C 19, L 24, M 22.

⁷⁸ B 25, I 17.

⁷⁹ F 19.

⁸⁰ G 18, J 13.

⁸¹ No. 12 B 10. Cf. text, Greig, *Traditional Ballads*, p. 14.

⁸² C 7.

⁸³ H 10.

⁸⁴ I 7, S 6.

⁸⁵ P 10.

⁸⁶ Q 8.

⁸⁷ No. 10 D 17, F 20, R 13, S 5.

⁸⁸ No. 110 B 20.

⁸⁹ Cf. A 14, F 27, G 12, J 15, K 9, M 7. Simply "tree": D 5, I 6.

Cf. E 29, H 9.

⁹⁰ See A 14, etc.

"gallows to be my heir;"⁹¹ passages which, like euphemisms for death and dying, illustrate the ballad tendency for periphrasis.⁹² The "greenwood gallows tree" occurs in two texts of this piece,⁹³ simply "hanged," "gallows-tree," or "tree," in other copies.⁹⁴ Robin Hood and his merry men are of course liable at all times as ornaments for the gallows, but the outlaw chief knows how to retaliate upon his enemies, the "sheriffe of Nottingham," for example, in heroic threats like the following:⁹⁵

'Thou shalt be the first man'⁹⁶
Shall flower this gallow-tree.'

Hanging, along with beheading, plucking out the eyes, and shooting at with arrows, is, according to *Young Benjie*, a way of satisfying blood-vengeance.⁹⁷ The false nurse, according to certain texts of *Lamkin*, and the mason, according to others, suffer death by hanging.⁹⁸ The traitorous steward in *Sir Aldingar*, belongs to the same tradition as the false nurse in *Lamkin* and other ballads, and pays for his perfidy on the gallows-tree,⁹⁹ a tree, standing beneath which, makes the leper of the story whole.¹⁰⁰ Enough here to mention the title of another ballad, *The Maid Freed from the Gallows*,¹⁰¹ one of our best traditional pieces, and a text of which has been found as a children's game,¹⁰² "the last stage of many old ballads."¹⁰³

⁹¹ No. 173 B 20, I 21, C 17, N 8, T 13, AA 1.

⁹² See *infra*, pp. 81 f

⁹³ E 20, V 9 See also *The Maid Freed from the Gallows* (95 E 5, F 2).

⁹⁴ A 17, D 22, H 17, S 9, U 11, W 9, X 14 f., Y 12, BB 2, and text, Child, V, 246 f., sts. 17, 18, 20, 23 f.

⁹⁵ No. 140 A 17.

⁹⁶ Cf. B 29: "They took the gallows from the slack, they set it in the glen"

⁹⁷ No. 86 A 19 f., B 10 f.

⁹⁸ No. 93: the nurse, C 23, Q 14; the mason, B 27, F 23, I 14, Q (Child, II, 341), and text, Child, V, 295.

⁹⁹ No. 59 A 53, B 32.

¹⁰⁰ A 53. On the gallows and the hangman's rope in folk medicine see John Aubrey, *Remaines of Gentilisme and Judaisme*, pp. 118, 198, 241, W. G. Black, *Folk-Medicine*, p. 100.

¹⁰¹ No 95.

¹⁰² F.

¹⁰³ Child, *op. cit.*, II, 346. See also *ibid.*, V, 480: "Games."

According to English and American variants of the ballad *Geordie*, variants recovered since the Child collection, the hero is to be hanged by a silken cord or in golden chains because of his nobility. In one American version he is to be "hung in a white silk robe" because he was "of royal blood:"¹⁰⁴

Georgie he was hung in a white silk robe,
Such robes there was not many,
Because he was of that royal blood
And was loved by a virtuous lady.

This reading may be compared with that in an English copy from Somerset:¹⁰⁵

Let Goerdie hang in golden chains,
His crimes were never many,
Because he came from the royal blood
And courted a virtuous lady.

Other British and American texts have virtually the same passage,¹⁰⁶ but this incident is found in only one of the Child copies.¹⁰⁷

Decapitation as an act of private revenge has already been treated.¹⁰⁸ It appears again in this light in *Young Benjie*.¹⁰⁹ As an act of public justice it occurs in the following pieces: *Young Waters*, *The Laird of Wariston*, *Mary Hamilton*, *Lord Derwentwater*, and *Geordie*. The offense in *Young Waters* is that of a young man's finding favor in the eyes of a queen; in *The Laird of Wariston* and *Mary Hamilton*, murder; in *Lord Derwentwater*, high treason; in *Geordie*, stealing fifteen of the king's horses and selling them in Bohemia.¹¹⁰ Block,

¹⁰⁴ J A F L, XXXII, 504.

¹⁰⁵ Sharp and Marson, *Folk-Songs from Somerset*, First Series, p. 5

¹⁰⁶ Campbell and Sharp, *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, p. 118: "white silk cord." So in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, I, 164 f. Lucy Broadwood, *English Traditional Songs and Carols*, p. 33: with a "silken cord" R. V. Williams, *Folk-Songs of England*, Book II, 49: in "chains of gold" because of his royalty. So in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, II, 27 f., two texts, and *ibid.*, IV, 89. J. H. Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South*, p. 136. "Georgie he was hung in a white silk robe, such robes there was not many, because he was of that royal blood and was loved by a virtuous lady."

¹⁰⁷ Given in an appendix, *Ballads*, IV, 142, st. 16.

¹⁰⁸ *Supra*, pp. 13 ff.

¹⁰⁹ No. 86 A 19, B 10.

¹¹⁰ No. 209 F 2. See Child, IV, 124 f.

axe, headsman, headsman's fee, all find depiction in *Lord Derwentwater* — the axe, according to different texts of the ballad, being a "pole-axe," a "braid axe," or a "broad-mouthed axe;"¹¹¹ the executioner, an "old gray-headed man," a "good old man," a "brave" or "grave" old man.¹¹² On the tolbooth-stairs, Geordie's lady, who has come to ransom her husband, is confronted with the "fatal block," the "aix to head him," and Geordie himself with "bands o airn upon him,"¹¹³ or in other copies with the "napkin" tied over his face.¹¹⁴

The "heiding hill," found in *Young Waters*, *The Laird of Wariston*, and *Mary Hamilton*, deserves brief consideration here, since the hill is mentioned as a place of execution in other incidents of death by burning or hanging. Along with him to the "heiding-hill" go *Young Waters'* lady, his young son, and his horse.¹¹⁵ "Headin-hill" and "gallow-tree," according to stanzas in one text of *Mary Hamilton*, may be mentioned together.¹¹⁶ One text of *The Laird of Wariston* gives Lady Wariston's punishment as burning, another copy as rolling in a spiked barrel, Buchan's version as decapitation:¹¹⁷

They've taen her out at nine at night,
Loot not the sun upon her shine,
And had her to yon heading-hill,
And headed her baith neat and fine.

The instrument of execution here is probably the "maiden," a sort of guillotine formerly in use in Scotland.¹¹⁸

The "highest hill" is the place for hanging designated in one copy of *Lord Randal*;¹¹⁹ the "head o yon hill," or the "high hill," in two variants of *Mary Hamilton*.¹²⁰ The ex-

¹¹¹ No. 208 B 8, D 9, E 12, H 11, I 14, J 10.

¹¹² Old men in balladry are usually described as "silly" (harmless, innocent? OE *sælig*), but they often have something sinister about them. See *supra*, p. 22.

¹¹³ No. 209 A 6.

¹¹⁴ B 10, C 7. See also D 11 ff., F 13 f., H 14, I 23, J 20. F 13 f. speaks of the "Gallows Wynd," the gallows lane.

¹¹⁵ No. 94, sts. 13 f.

¹¹⁶ No. 173 F 24.

¹¹⁷ No. 194 C 24 ff

¹¹⁸ See Child, IV, 30.

¹¹⁹ No. 12 C 7.

¹²⁰ E 20, F 23; lines borrowed from no. 95.

pression, "head o yon hill" is probably the original reading for "headin-hill" found in another copy of the latter ballad.¹²¹ Two versions of *The Cruel Brother* bequeath the "highest gallows" to the slayer or his wife.¹²² Respecting this reading, the Child glossary has the following: "one elevated above a triangular framework, for special offenders; der hochste Galgen; . . . Perhaps simply the highest that is to be had."¹²³ This of course is quite in keeping with the phrase, "hanged higher than Haman,"¹²⁴ but it may have reference to the "hill" as a place of execution. "To save me from the head o yon hill, yon greenwood gallows-tree," occurs in one copy of *The Maid Freed from the Gallows*, and with "high hill" and "gallow-tree,"¹²⁵ is the original of similar readings in *Mary Hamilton*.¹²⁶ Other versions of the former ballad have "high, high gallows tree," and "high gallous tree."¹²⁷

The mason in one copy of *Lamkin* is hanged "out over the gate;"¹²⁸ the miller in *The Twa Sisters*, "on his high gate," or "at his mill-gate."¹²⁹ The sister, the proper murderer of the drowned maiden, is according to one version of this piece to be hanged at "the bonny bows o London."¹³⁰ The "Hanging Well" of *Rookhope Ryde* may or may not be a well near a place of execution.¹³¹ Hanging on a gallows pin, "out oer a pin," or "on a pin" "before my ain bower-door," are found in *The Cruel Brother*, *Mary Hamilton*, *Gude Wallace*, and *The Twa Knights*,¹³² the expression "pin" having reference to the projecting or horizontal beam of the gallows, or any projection upon which a rope could be fastened.¹³³

¹²¹ F 24.

¹²² No. 11 G 18, J 13.

¹²³ *Ballads*, V, 337, citing Grimm's *Deutsches Wörterbuch*.

¹²⁴ Cf. "hangit hie," no. 93 I 14; "high hangit," no. 110 A 14, B 15, etc.

¹²⁵ No. 95 D 5, E 5.

¹²⁶ No. 173 E 20, F 23.

¹²⁷ H b (Child, II, 355), K 2 (Child, V, 233 f.). Cf. no. 93 F 23.

¹²⁸ No. 93 B 27. Cf. Q (Child, II, 341): "before Lord Weir's gate . . . on the tree."

¹²⁹ No. 10 R 13, S 5.

¹³⁰ F 20 f. see Child, V, 318, "arches of a bridge? windings of a river?"

¹³¹ No. 179, st. 17. On "hanging well" see Child, V, 343.

¹³² Nos. 11 B 25, I 17; 173 D 18, F 18, and text, Child, V, 247, st. 18; 157 B 18; 268, st. 15.

Just where the Gipsies in *The Gypsy Laddie* are "putten down,"¹³⁴—a euphemism for "hanged"—is not clear.¹³⁵

Burning as a punishment for incontinence, murder, or treason, takes place on the head of a hill or mountain in *Lady Maisry*, *Lamkin*, and *The Lord of Lorn*. For abetting Lamkin, who expiates his crime by being "boiled in a pot full of lead," the false nurse suffers death by burning:¹³⁶

The false nurse was burnt
on the mountain hill-head.

"And on the head o yon high hill," Lady Maisry meets a like fate at the hands of her relatives.¹³⁷ As for the false steward in *The Lord of Lorn*, his executioners, after they had inflicted upon him every conceivable variety of torture, "burnte him eke vpon a hyll."¹³⁸

But to conclude this matter of crimes and penalties, there are, in addition to the foregoing, several other modes of capital punishment: by drowning in *The Twa Sisters*; by starving, in *Johnie Scot*; with a possible instance in *Edward* and *Lizie Wan*, of sending a criminal to sea in a leaky boat. *Johnie Scot* is another story of an English maiden with a Scottish lover. With bairn to Jack, the little Scott, this king's daughter must be "hungred" "till she die," a punishment suggested by her mother, according to a Motherwell text of the ballad:¹³⁹

'But if she be with child,' her mother said,¹⁴⁰
'As woe forbid it be,
I'll put her until a dungeon dark,
And hunger her till she die.'

A similar punishment is meted out to the false nurse in an American text of *Lamkin*:¹⁴¹

¹³³ See Child, V, 364 f.. "pin, gallows-pin."

¹³⁴ No. 200 A 10, F 13

¹³⁵ Cf. "gae, gang, go down" for hanged. See Child, V, 337

¹³⁶ No. 93 D 30.

¹³⁷ No. 65 H 14.

¹³⁸ No. 271 A 104

¹³⁹ No. 99 C 4.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. A 4, B 5 ("hang" for "hunger"), F 4, G 2, J 2, K 2 ("punish"), L 3, M 5, N 4, R 5, S 5, T 5.

¹⁴¹ No. 93 (Child, V, 296).

And the nurse she was chained
In a dungeon to die.

The barbarities practiced upon Young Beichan in the Moorish prison have already been noted.¹⁴²

The *lex talionis* or Priest's Code of the Israelites demands that the murderess in *The Two Sisters* be drowned, this according to Buchan's copy:¹⁴³

The firstand spring the fiddle did play,
Said, "Ye'll drown my sister, as she's dune me."

The punishment of sending a malefactor to sea in a leaky boat, a punishment found among the early Germans and among savages,¹⁴⁴ is not impossibly reflected in the ballads of *Edward* and *Lizie Wan*, both of them murder pieces. The hero of the first song has slain his brother and is questioned by his mother as to what death he wishes to die. Strangely enough, as in similar crises in ballad story, the father does not enter here:¹⁴⁵

"What death dost thou desire to die,
Son Davie, son Davie?

"I'll set my foot in a bottomless ship,
Mother lady, mother lady:
I'll set my foot in a bottomless ship,
And ye'll never see mair o me."

In the foregoing incident, as we point out elsewhere in this study, Gummere sees a hint of the old custom of ship-burial.¹⁴⁶ This interpretation does not necessarily, however, conflict with the view that we are dealing here, as in *Lizie Wan*, with the operation of an early type of penal code. This latter song tells the story of a brother who, in barbarous fashion, slays his sister because she is with child to him. There is evidence in this piece of the ancient idea of paternal authority, and Geordy Wan foresees that upon the arrival of

¹⁴² *Supra*, pp. 33 f.

¹⁴³ No. 10 O 18.

¹⁴⁴ See Gummere, *Germanic Origins*, pp. 298 ff.; "Crimes and Punishments," *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, IV.

¹⁴⁵ No. 13 A 8 f. Cf B 5: the slain man is the "fadir."

¹⁴⁶ See *infra*, pp. 122 and note 223.

his father he will be brought to quick judgment and be made to pay the extreme penalty: ¹⁴⁷

“ O what wilt thou do when thy father comes hame,¹⁴⁸
 O my son Geordy Wan? ”
 “ I’ll set my foot in a bottomless boat,
 And swim to the sea-ground ”

The Blood-Fine. One regrets that limitations of space forbid an extended discussion of the ballad idea of justice, but we must give here some consideration to the crime or blood-fine ¹⁴⁹ “ While many penalties of mutilation occur,” remarks Gummere, with respect to the Anglo-Saxon laws, “ most of the punishments are in terms of money paid as fine and *wergild*.” ¹⁴⁹ Fines had not, of course, always to be paid in money. Among the Germans, for example, we are told by Tacitus, fines were assessed in terms of cattle.¹⁵⁰

Mindful of Tacitus’ cattle, and the Anglo-Saxon *wite*, but with no hope of matching the pledge exacted by Thor of the giant Egil, the pledge, namely, of both Egil’s children,¹⁵¹ we may proceed to survey the various examples of ransom to be found in balladry. Ransoming or “ borrowing ” is well illustrated by the following pieces: *Jock o the Side*, *Hughie Grame*, *Fause Foodrage*, by reference to a Danish analogue, *The Clerk’s Twa Sons o Owsenford*, *The Knight and Shepherd’s Daughter*, *Geordie*, *The Laird of Wariston*, *The Maid Freed from the Gallows*, and *Young Beichan*. There is an exchange of military prisoners in *Otterburn*.¹⁵²

Young William, a Danish parallel of *Fause Foodrage*,¹⁵³ affords an excellent example of the *wergild*. The hero, who gives the ballad its name, discovers that one, Svend, has years ago slain his father. According to ancient Teutonic

¹⁴⁷ No. 51 A 11.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. B 13 f.

¹⁴⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 299.

¹⁵⁰ *Germania*, xii.

¹⁵¹ See Vigfusson-Powell, *C. P. B.*, I, 225. See also *ibid.*, II, 700: “ Ransom.”

¹⁵² No. 161 A 69.

¹⁵³ No. 89

custom, there is but one of two things for William to do — to avenge his father's death or exact a fine for it.¹⁵⁴ Summoned by Young William to the Assize, Svend refuses to pay the blood-fine and is slain by his enemy:

Then forth young Willam boldly stepp'd,¹⁵⁵
 No softness he betray'd;
 "My father thou hast foully slain,
 "And fine hast never paid."
 "No," answer'd Swend of Voldislef,
 And spirted up the earth;
 "Nor for thy father shalt thou get
 "Penny or penny's worth."

Svend's death follows, and Young William is in turn called to court to answer, for his deed, to Svend's brother, Sir Nilus. In lieu of paying the blood-fine which Sir Nilus demands, William offers to marry Sir Nilus' sister. Sir Nilus scorns the proposal and is slain in a fight with William, who, obtaining the king's mercy, rides home to his mother. A similar situation motivates the story in another Danish ballad, *Liden Engel*, which is closely related to *Young William*. Little Engel's uncle has slain the hero's father and has failed to pay the fine. With the sanction and the support of the king, who recognizes the law in these matters, Little Engel burns his uncle and all his people in a stone chamber in which they had taken refuge.¹⁵⁶

Silver, gold, jewels, or a definite sum of money figure as ransom in the British texts of *The Maid Freed from the Gallows*,¹⁵⁷ but in the foreign variants, which are more perfect than the English, we find not only gold and jewels but horses, oxen, cows, sheep, and even castles.¹⁵⁸ The fidelity of Border clansmen finds expression in *Jock o the Side*, one of the best of ballads, when Jock's friends — lords and ladies

¹⁵⁴ To exact the blood-fine was as honorable as to take vengeance. See Elton-Powell, Saxo, p. 136.

¹⁵⁵ Translation, Prior, *op. cit.*, III, 428. See Child, II, 297 f.

¹⁵⁶ See translation, Prior, III, 379:

"My father thou hast murder'd,
 And never paid the fine,
 And darest thus upbraid me!
 But vengeance now is mine."

¹⁵⁷ No. 95, A, B, C, etc.

¹⁵⁸ See Child, II, 346 ff., 514; III, 516; V, 231 ff., 296.

—bethink themselves of ways and means of delivering him from Newcastle, where he is held for killing Peeter a Whifeild. Drowes of kine, oxen, and "troopes" of sheep, all go for Iohn a Side: ¹⁵⁹

' But wee'le goe sell our droues of kine,
And after them our oxen sell,
And after them our troopes of sheepe,
But wee will loose him out of the New Castell'

But the kine, oxen, and sheep, are in the foregoing ballad to be sold, and not, apparently, to be given directly as payment of a fine. In other texts of this piece, however, no express mention is made of selling,¹⁶⁰ and in the excellent ballad of *Hughie Grame* we have a clear parallel for Tacitus' system of fines which were assessed in terms of cattle.¹⁶¹ Sir Hugh of the Grime has been tried and convicted of the capital offense of stealing the Bishop's mare. According to certain texts of the ballad it is money—"five hundred pieces" or "five hundred measures" of gold—which is offered as ransom,¹⁶² but other texts have "five hundred white stots," "twenty white owsen," or a "hundred steeds." The Johnson copy reads:

Up then bespake the brave Whitefooid,¹⁶³
As he sat by the bishop's knee
' Five hundred white stots I'll gie you,
If ye'll let Hughie Graham gae free.'

The practice among savages of meeting various obligations by giving animals of one kind or another, is too well known to necessitate citing examples.

Sir Charlie Hay has been slain and the "wyte" or blame laid on Geordie Gordon. While the condemned man is on his way to the block, his lady appears and with money collected in part at least from the bystanders, redeems her

¹⁵⁹ No. 187 A 5.

¹⁶⁰ B 4 "I'll part wi them a' ere Johnie shall die." C 4. "And I'll gie them a' before my son Johny die."

¹⁶¹ See *supra*, p. 54.

¹⁶² No. 191 A 14, 16; C 10: "A peck of white pennies;" as in D 6. B 6 "five hundred white pence." E 4. "a thousand pounds."

¹⁶³ No. 191 B 4 C 8. "Twenty white owsen, my gude lord, if you'll grant Hughie the Graeme to me." D 9 "A yoke of fat oxen I'll give to my lord, if etc." E 6. "A hundred steeds, my lord, I'll gie, if etc."

lord's life by paying the king a fine of five thousand or five hundred pounds, ten thousand or one thousand crowns, according to the several versions of the ballad.¹⁶⁴ Young Beichan, deep in a Moorish dungeon, would give cities, lands, and castles, among other considerations, if some lady would "borrow" him.¹⁶⁵ There is something made of ransom in one copy of *The Laird of Wariston* and in *Sir John Butler*.¹⁶⁶

To conclude this matter of compensation exacted for certain offenses in the form of blood, money, or cattle, brief attention may be given the ballad of *The Knight and Shepherd's Daughter* along with the Norse analogue of this piece. According to the British story, best given in its Scottish variants, a knight is accused before the king of having wronged a shepherd lass, his accuser being the lass herself. Confronted with the royal command that he marry the injured maiden, the knight attempts to buy himself free from the obligation. His offer of "full forty pound ty'd up in a glove," "a purse of gold weel locked in a glove,"¹⁶⁷ and so on, according to the several texts of the ballad, is summarily rejected by the lass, who eventually turns out to be of royal or of noble blood. The Baron of Leys in another song, in order to set matters right, has the choice of marriage, death, or the payment of ten thousand crowns;¹⁶⁸ and Child Waters promises, in case her child is by him, to settle upon Faire Ellen both Cheshire and Lancashire.¹⁶⁹

Turning now to the tragic ballad of *Ebbe Galt*, the Danish analogue of *The Knight and Shepherd's Daughter*, we come upon an excellent illustration of the old custom of buying off a criminal. Ebbe Galt, the king's nephew—the uncle-nephew relationship was sacrosanct in early times—has violated a farmer's wife and killed three swains. Tried and convicted before the king, Ebbe is sentenced to death, in

¹⁶⁴ No. 209 A 13, B 26, C 10 f., D 16 f., F 13 (with no help from the bystanders), G 8 f., H 12 f., I 19 ff., J 30 ff., K 2.

¹⁶⁵ No. 53 A 5, B 6, C 4, D 5, etc.

¹⁶⁶ Nos. 194 C 17 ff.; 165, st. 6.

¹⁶⁷ No. 110 A 16, B 21. C 17. takes her up to a "hie towr-head" and offers her "hunder punds in a glove." D 6: "hundred pounds weel lockit in a glove" E 32, 34, 36: "a purse of gold" told "on a stane," "in a glove," "on his knee." Cf. G 16, H 12, K 12, M 21, 23; N 22, 24.

¹⁶⁸ No. 241 A 9, B 6, C 16.

¹⁶⁹ No. 63 A 4.

spite of the handsome redemption price offered by his father, a compensation which, had justice permitted, the king himself would have tripled out of regard for his nephew:

Uprose Sir Peter, Ebbé's sire,¹⁷⁰
 A hero strong and bold;
 "I bid my horse for Ebbé's life,
 And a thousand marks of gold."

But answered him the Danish king,
 "For judgment here he stood;
 I'd give myself three thousand marks,
 Release him if I cou'd."

Ebbe is taken away to a "bushy field," his head "chopp'd" off, and laid on his shield. "This offer to buy off a criminal," observes Prior in his notes on the foregoing ballad, "was agreeable to the age. So in Layamon's Brut King Arthur threatens that if again any one quarrels at his table neither gold nor fine horse shall ransom him from death."¹⁷¹ In connection with the ransom as illustrated in *The Maid Freed from the Gallows* should have been mentioned those stanzas found in three texts of *Mary Hamilton*,¹⁷² which are clearly borrowed from the former ballad. The incident of the redemption price is present, however, in several other texts of the latter piece and seems in these copies not to have come from *The Maid Freed from the Gallows*:¹⁷³

'But if my father and mother kend
 The death that I maun die,
 O mony wad be the good red guineas
 That wad be gien for me.'

¹⁷⁰ Prior, *op. cit.*, II, 92.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, II, 93.

¹⁷² No. 173 E, F, X.

¹⁷³ No. 173 U 16. Cf. V 12, Y 9, Z 6.

III

FEY FOLK AND PREMONITIONS OF DEATH

Moving as it does in the shadow of an inscrutable and all-powerful destiny the action of our best traditional songs of death is purely tragic. But the hero of folksong meets his doom with a noble and stoic acquiescence. For him there is no questioning of that which is to be or not to be. Un-schooled in the procrastinative subtleties of Hamlet, unacquainted, in the main, with the Christian belief that the hand of God may avert his destiny, he sheds his "heart's-blude" without having first racked his brain over problems of free will and fate. For him, indeed, there is no problem. The mood of the ballad is not that of reflection but of action. And it is largely this fatalistic mood lying at the heart of balladry that gives our folksong its dramatic swiftness, its direct thrust.

Fey Folk. In the expressions "fey,"¹ meaning destined to die, "weird,"² "ill dooms," and "destinye" the characters of folksong voice their awareness of that fate against which they are powerless. "There'll nae man die but he that's fie," cries the Laird's Jock in *Jock o the Side*,³ a belief expressed with equal assurance in *Archie o Cawfield*⁴ and announced by Robin Hood with, one feels, a superfluous appeal to his "deere Lady":⁵

"Ah, deere Lady!" said Robin Hoode,
"Thou art both mother and may!
I thinke it was neuer mans destinye
To dye before his day."

"I fear the day I'm fey," says Rothiemay in *The Fire of Frendraught*⁶ and this with good reason, but the heroine of

¹ Ballad variants in the Child texts: "fay," "fae," "fee," "fie."

² Variants in the Child texts: "wierd," "weer."

³ No. 187 B 30, C 24.

⁴ No. 188 A 39, B 24, C 26. See also text in Gavin Greig, *Folk-Song of the North-East*, art. LXXV.

⁵ *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne*, 118, st. 39.

⁶ No. 196 A 4.

the poor ballad *Lady Isabel*⁷ is not aware that she is a "fey woman."

In the song of *Bonnie Annie*,⁸ a possible derivative of the story of Jonah, a ship will not sail because some one on board is marked for death. To discover this fey person, the sailors, by a kind of ceremonial appeal to the gods, cast "black bullets twice six and forty":

"There's fey fowk in our ship, she winna sail for me,
There's fey fowk in our ship, she winna sail for me"

They've casten black bullets twice six and forty,
And ae the black bullet fell on bonnie Annie.

The captain would save Annie, but still the ship "winna sail," and so Annie is cast overboard. This incident of the spellbound ship is not explicitly given in either of Child's two other texts of the ballad, but we have it well preserved in a version recovered since Child:⁹

For O the ship was pixy-held¹⁰
And lots were cast for the cause on't;
But every time the lot fell out
On her and her baby, on her and her baby.

Brown Robyn's sin of incest in *Brown Robyn's Confession*¹¹ is brought to light by the casting of "kevels," and the sinner is thrown into the sea. Robyn's monstrous sin was such as to qualify him beyond redemption for the ranks of fey folk, but a miracle of the Virgin saves him.

Although five of her sisters have met their doom in the birth of their first child, the heroine in *Fair Mary of Wallington*¹² goes to the marriage-bed — this, however, against her own judgment, for she feels certain that she, like her sisters, is destined to die in travail. In *Captain Car*¹³ the

⁷ No 261, st 2.

⁸ No. 24 A.

⁹ Sharp and Marson, *Folk Songs from Somerset*, First Series (1915), p. 29. Cf. texts in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, II, pp 33 ff.; III, pp. 292 f.

¹⁰ The incident of a ship's refusing to sail is found also in *The Cruel Ship's Carpenter*, Sharp and Marson, *op. cit.*, Fourth Series, pp. 11 f. Cf. two texts of *Sir William Gower*, *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, V, pp. 263 f. See also the incident of the intelligent ship in *Young Allan*, Child, no. 245 A, B, C.

¹¹ No. 57.

¹² No. 91. See especially version A

¹³ No. 178 D 22 f.

bonny face of the maiden whom he has slain causes Edom o Gordon to guess "ill dooms." One of his men scoffs at such "freits," superstitious notions about omens, but in the end Edom's presentiment is shown to have been no idle one. All but five of his fifty men are slain and he himself leaps into the flames. Warned by the dream of a "witch-woman" that he is fated to die, the knight in *Lord Livingston* meets his death on the "point o Seaton's sword." Of this event his lady declares that she has had foreknowledge from her birth:¹⁴

"My mother got it in a book,¹⁵
The first night I was born,
I woud be wedded till a knight,
And him slain on the morn."

The "weird" or fate of the ballad hero or heroine may be heavy and hard. Thus in the old song of *Gil Brenton* a maiden tells of her unhappy fortune. She and her six sisters cast lots to see who should go to the greenwood. The "cavil" fell on her, and her "wierd it was the hardest":¹⁶

"We keist the cavils us amang,
To see which shoud to the greenwood gang

"Ohone, alas' for I was youngest,
An ay my weird it was the hardest.

"The cavil it did on me fa,
Which was the cause of a' my wae."

But the story ends happily as does that of *Kemp Owyne*, a ballad of transformation and retransformation, although at the outset the "weird" of the maiden in this latter piece is heavier even than that of the lass in *Gil Brenton*:

¹⁴ No. 262.

¹⁵ Cf. the "Book of Mable," a book of prophecies, in *The Earl of Westmoreland*, 177, sts. 61, 89; the "booke," probably a book of magic, in *Northumberland Betrayed by Douglas*, 176, st. 25; the "litle booke" in *King Arthur and King Cornwall*, 30, sts. 46 f., with which Sir Bredbeddle subdues a fire-breathing fiend. See also "gramarye" in *King Estmere*, 60, sts. 36, 41, 55, 68, and the Glossary, Child, *Ballads*, V, 340, at "grammarye."

¹⁶ No. 5 A 46 ff., 42; also B 37; C 6, 61; F 6. Cf. "weirdless wicht," no. 173 H 3.

"Come here, come here, you freely feed,¹⁷
 An lay your head low on my knee;
 The hardest weird I will you read
 That eer war read to a lady."

Finally released from her enchantment, by which she had become a "fiery beast," the maiden lays as heavy a weird upon the enchantress:

"O a heavier weird lght her upon
 Than ever fell on wile woman;"

The Earl of Wigton's eldest daughter in *Richie Story* is happy in her lot and that which "Providence" has ordered for her.¹⁸

Dreams. In British balladry, as in Eddic poetry,¹⁹ dream auguries are not uncommon. But little there is in folksong that augurs well, and dreams and omens point almost invariably to death and misfortune — this chiefly by reason of the generally tragic character of the ballad story. In such dreams birds, animals, and plants usually figure. In the Motherwell copy of *Young Johnstone*²⁰ to dream of ravens means "the loss o a near friend":

"I dreamd the ravens ate your flesh,
 And the lions drank your blude"

"To dream o ravens, love," he said,²¹
 "Is the loss o a near friend;"

In this same text the hero's mother dreams of red swine. Such a dream, says Willie, "bodeth meikle ill," but he is thinking of the "blude" rather than of the swine:

¹⁷ No. 34 B; cf. Bb 1. In Bb 3 "weird" is used as a verb: "I weird ye to a fiery beast."

¹⁸ No. 232 A 11.

¹⁹ See Vigfusson-Powell, *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, I, 347, 393, 413; II, 410, 547.

²⁰ No. 88 D. The dream does not appear in other texts.

²¹ The raven prognosticates death, according to superstitions current in Scotland and the North of England. See Swainson, *The Folk-Lore of British Birds*, p. 89.

"I dreamd a dream, son Willie," she said,
 "I doubt it bodes nae gude;
 That your ain room was fu o red swine,²³
 And your bride's bed daubd wi blude."

"To dream o blude, mither," he said,
 "It bodeth meikle ill;
 And I hae slain a Young Caldwell,
 And they're seeking me to kill."

That swine should appear in dreams is perhaps reminiscent of an ancient swine cult.

Dreaming of swine likewise occurs in *Clerk Saunders*, in three texts of *Fair Margaret and Sweet William*, and in *Lord Thomas Stuart*. The dream portends death, or, as in *Clerk Saunders*, is of a divinatory nature:²³

"O I have dreamed a dream," she said,
 "And such an dreams cannot be good;
 I dreamed my bower was full of swine,
 And the ensign's clothes all dipped in blood."

"I have dreamed another dream,
 And such an dreams are never good;
 That I was combing down my yellow hair,
 And dipping it in the ensign's blood."

In another version of this ballad²⁴ the maiden dreams that she was "cutting" her "yellow hair,"²⁵ and dipping it in the wells o blood."²⁶

The color of the swine varies according to different ballads. In *Young Johnstone* it is red, as also in the Douce version of *Fair Margaret and Sweet William*:²⁷

"I dreamd my bower was full of red swine,
 And my bride-bed full of blood."

²³ On dreaming of swine as an ill omen see W. Gregor, *Folk-Lore of the North-East of Scotland*, p. 29; W. Henderson, *Folk-Lore of the Northern Counties*, p. 327.

²⁴ No. 69 E.

²⁵ D.

²⁶ The color "yellow" occurs well over two hundred times in the Child ballads, nearly always descriptive of hair—man's or woman's; occasionally with reference to dress, gold, flowers, etc.

²⁷ Cf. the incident of a maiden's drinking her slain lover's blood in *The Braes o Yarrow*, 214.

²⁸ No. 74 A.

The swine are white in the better of the Percy copies of the foregoing song²⁸ as well as in texts recovered since Child.²⁹ The reading in one Percy version,³⁰ "wild men's wine," is corrupt, but makes sense when altered to "wild men and swine." In *Lord Lirringston*³¹ the swine have become "milk, white swans." They are retained in *Lord Thomas Stuart*, but their color is not designated. In *Sir John Butler* the dream of ill omen is of blood "soe red" only.³²

Dreaming of "pu'ing the heather green" is premonitory of death in ten versions of *The Braes o Yarrow*.³³ In two other copies, the heroine dreams of pulling the "heather bell;"³⁴ in the Macmath Manuscript, "apples green,"³⁵ and in Herd's version, "the birk sae green."³⁶ The dream in the Percy text is related by the heroine and read by her sister:³⁷

"Sister, sister, I dreamt a dream —
You read a dream to gude, O!
That I was puing the heather green
On the bonny braes of Yarrow."

"Sister, sister, I'll read your dream,
But alas! it's unto sorrow;
Your good lord is sleeping sound,
He is lying dead on Yarrow."

The color green is frequently associated with fairies, witches,

²⁸ B.

²⁹ C. J. Sharp, *Folk-Songs of England*, Book 1, p. 33; *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, XIX, 281; J. H. Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South*, p. 70.

³⁰ C. "Wild swine" is the reading in three American texts: *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, XXX, 303; Campbell and Sharp, *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, p. 63; Josephine McGill, *Folk Songs of the Kentucky Mountains*, p. 69. An English version, *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, III, 64 f.: "He dreamed his bowels were full of wild swine." Another American variant, *J A F L*, XXIII, 381 f.: "young science."

³¹ No. 262.

³² No. 165.

³³ No. 214 A, C-F, I-M.

³⁴ O, S (Child, V, 255). This reading is found also in a recently recovered text in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, V, 113.

³⁵ R (Child, IV, 523).

³⁶ O. This reading occurs also in a version recorded in the *Rymour Miscellanea*, I, 44.

and the dead — this in balladry "as elsewhere" — and it is for this reason, in all probability, that it is regarded as unlucky. Naturally enough it would appear in a dream of ill omen. That this dream in the Macmath text should be of "apples green" may be doubly significant by reason 1) of the ill omen that attaches to green and 2) the magic character of the apple and the apple tree in traditions the world over.³⁷ The same general observation may safely be made with respect to the dream incident in Herd's text of our ballad: "I dreamd I pu'd the birk sae green." The sacred character of the birch is illustrated in our best ballad of the supernatural, *The Wife of Usher's Well*,³⁸ according to which three dead sons return to their mother. Their hats were made of

³⁷ D. In R also the sister reads the dream; in B, J, K, Q, S, the father; in I, L, the brother.

³⁸ To give some of the most notable of the ballad instances, the fairies in *The Wee Wee Man* (38), *Thomas Rymer* (37 A), and *Tam Lin* (39 D, M), are dressed in green; the mermaid's sleeve in *Clerk Colvill* (42 A 6) is "sae green;" the witch in *Allison Gross* (35) "blaw thrice on a grass-green horn;" one of the ghost babes in *The Cruel Mother* (20 H 9) is clad in green, and the spirit of the drowned maiden in *The Twa Sisters* (10 Q) is called a "ghaist sae green." According to *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet* (73 B 20) green is unlucky in love matters.

³⁹ On green as an unlucky color see W. Henderson, *Northern Counties*, pp. 34 f.; *County Folk-Lore*, VI, 81; VII, 36 ff.; A. Gilchrist in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, VI, 82-84, with reference to the English ballads and children's singing-games; Child, *Ballads*, II, 181 f.; IV, 162 n. On the symbolism of green see, for example, E. K. Chambers, *The Mediaeval Stage*, I, 185 f.; for numerous instances of this color in folklore see Kittredge, *Gawain and the Green Knight*, pp. 195 ff. and *passim*; on green as a fairy color see, for example, W. Y. E. Wentz, *The Fairy-Faith in Celtic Countries*, *passim*; on green in popular medicine see W. G. Black, *Folk-Medicine*, p. 114.

⁴⁰ On the widespread lore of the apple tree see Rev Hilderic Friend, *Flowers and Flower Lore*, pp. 199 f., 205 f., 276, 286, and *passim*. The magic apple is especially common in Celtic tradition; see, for example, Meyer-Nutt, *The Voyage of Bran*, I, 3 ff., 150, 169, 189 f.

For English balladry we have the following: Tam Lin in the ballad of that name (39 G 26, K 14) is captured by the fairies while sleeping under an apple tree. The "ympe-tree" in the romance of *Sir Orfeo* — represented in balladry by our *King Orfeo* (19) — sleeping under which led to the queen's being carried off by the fairies, and the "semely" (derne, cumly) tree beneath which Thomas of Erceeldoune is lying when he sees the fairy queen, are probably apple trees. See Child, *Ballads*, I, 340; Kittredge, "Sir Orfeo," *American Journal of Philology*, VII, 190.

⁴¹ O.

⁴² No. 79 A 5, B 1.

"birk" that grew at the gates of Paradise.⁴³ In Gavin Greig's text of *The Braes o Yarrow*⁴⁴ the maiden dreams of pulling a "red, red rose," possibly a meaningless substitution of rose for the heather, apple, or birch of the Child pieces. It should be remembered, however, that in the ballad of *Tam Lin*⁴⁵ roses are found in the elf's enchanted wood and it is by plucking them that Janet summons her fairy-lover.⁴⁶

Other dreams that portend death or disaster are found in *Willie and Earl Richard's Daughter*:⁴⁷ a dream of drowning; in *Captain Car*:⁴⁸ Lord Hamleton dreams that his hall is on fire and his lady slain; and in *Sheath and Knife*:⁴⁹ a maiden dreams that her grave will be at the "rute o this tree." Nor must we overlook Douglas's dream of his own death in *The Battle of Otterburn*:⁵⁰

"But I have dreamed a dreary dream,⁵¹
Beyond the Isle of Sky;
I saw a dead man win a fight,
And I think that man was I."

Still other ballads furnish dreams of ill omen. It is not

⁴³ On the sacred character of the birch see Aubrey, *Remaines of Gentilisme and Judaisme*, p. 119; Burne, *Shropshire Folk-Lore*, p. 350; *Folk-Lore Journal*, VII, 106; *Folk-Lore*, XXI, 78; *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, XXV, 73; XXIII, 205; XVII, 117; XI, 161; Frazer, *Golden Bough*, II, 54; IX, 162; XI, 20 n, 162; W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folk-Lore of Northern India*, II, 86, 114.

⁴⁴ *Folk-Song of the North-East*, art. LVII.

⁴⁵ No. 39 A 19 f., B 5 f., C 2 f., F 2 f., etc.

⁴⁶ This peculiar form of trespass, summoning the demon of the wood, is found also in *Hind Etin* (41 A, B) where, however, the maiden pulls "nuts" instead of roses or flowers as in *Tam Lin*. See also *Babylon* (14 A, B, E). On this incident see Andrew Lang, "Breaking the Bough in the Grove of Diana," *Folk-Lore*, XVIII, 89-91.

⁴⁷ No. 102 A 12.

⁴⁸ No. 178 A 24 f.

⁴⁹ No. 16 E (Child, *Ballads*, III, 500).

⁵⁰ No. 161 C 19.

⁵¹ In view of the question as to the relation of the ballads to chronicles, romances, etc., it may be well to give here Andrew Lang's observation, in his *A Collection of Ballads*, p. 231, on the source of Douglas's dream. "Mr. Child [see Child, *Ballads*, III, 162] also thinks the 'dreary dream' may be copied from Hume of Godscroft. It is at least as probable that Godscroft borrowed from the ballad which he cites."

characteristic of the ghost of folksong to appear in a dream⁵² but it so makes its presence felt in one of the Child texts of *Fair Margaret and Sweet William*: "He dreamed that Lady Margaret was dead, and her ghost appeared to view."⁵³ The hero in *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet* learns of his true-love's death through a dream:⁵⁴

But up und wakend him Sweet Willie
Out of his dreary dream:
"I dreamed a dream this night,
God read a' dream to guid!
"That Fair Annies bowr was full of gentlemen,
An herself was dead;
But I will on to Fair Annie.
An si't if it be guid."

But the dream is not "guid" and the prayer to God avails naught. Sweet Willie finds her father and "her seven brithern, walking at her bier." And no less certainly comes to pass another lover's dream of death in *The Lass of Roch Royal*:⁵⁵

"O I dreamd a dream, my mother dear."⁵⁶
The thoughts o it gars me greet,
That Fair Annie of Rough Royal
Lay cauld dead at my feet."

The maiden's dream in *Young Andrew*⁵⁷ begins a story of

⁵² The *revenant* of balladry is in our best ballads of the return of the dead a decidedly corporeal ghost, a point in favor of its objectivity. In these songs dreams do not, as a rule, account for the returned dead man. See especially nos. 77, 78, and 79. On the living corpse or corporeal ghost, with reference to its occurrence in saga and balladry and elsewhere, see Hans Naumann, *Primitive Gemeinschaftskultur*, pp. 25, 27, 34, and *passim*.

⁵³ See Child, V, 293, st. 6. It is true that in two American texts of *The Wife of Usher's Well* (79) the ghost sons do come back in their mother's dream. See Campbell and Sharp, *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, pp. 73 f. However, there is no question but that rationalization has been at work in these texts.

⁵⁴ No. 73 G 25 f.

⁵⁵ No. 76 E 18.

⁵⁶ The dream is of death in only one other text of this piece, Child, III, st. 20. In texts A 23, B 20, D 23, and in a version unnumbered (Child, IV, 473, st. 37) the lover dreams simply that his mistress stands knocking at his door. In A 1 the heroine dreams of her lover.

⁵⁷ No. 48, st. 1.

tragic import, though the dream in itself seems to have nothing sinister about it. But in *The Mother's Malison*⁵⁸ May Meggie's vision of her true-love staring at her "bed-feet" all too certainly portends Willie's death in Clyde's water, a doom brought on by his mother's curse. It may be noted here that the ballad dream is apparently of a purely divinatory or, at times, prognosticatory character. It is not to be taken as causing the event of which it gives knowledge or foreknowledge.

A few other dream incidents remain to be surveyed, though they do not relate to death. The cruel lover in *Child Waters* dreams that his best steed is stolen. The ballad may be quoted in part to show the degree of importance that folk-song attaches to dreams. Willie is concerned to verify his dream:⁵⁹

"I dreamed a dream san the straine,⁶⁰
 Gued read a' dreams to gued!
 I dreamed my stable-dor was opned
 An stoun was my best steed.
 Ye gae, my sister,
 An see if the dream be gued."

The sister reports that in the stable Willie's much-abused mistress has borne him a son — an event which, we may suppose, Willie's dream somehow symbolized. Of more explicit interpretations of dreams we can instance for English balladry those in *Young Johnstone* and *The Braes o Yarrow*.⁶¹ The formula "Gued read a' dreams to gued," as given in the foregoing passage from *Child Waters* and in *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet*,⁶² may be taken as additional proof, however, that ballad folk were in the habit of interpreting their dreams.

The lover in *Thomas o Yonderdale*⁶³ dreams that his forsaken mistress stands "by his bedside" and upbraids him for inconstancy. Thomas immediately goes about setting

⁵⁸ No. 216 A 14.

⁵⁹ No. 63 K 24 (Child, V, 221).

⁶⁰ The dream occurs also in text J 27.

⁶¹ See *supra*, pp. 62 ff.

⁶² No. 73 G 25 f

⁶³ No. 253, st. 12

matters right with the lady in question. Robin Hood's dream that he was beaten and bound by two yeoman, who had taken away his bow, is interpreted by him as foreshadowing danger and he goes forth to take vengeance on his natural enemies in "greenwood where the bee."⁶⁴ A rather elaborately symbolical dream occurs in *Sir Aldingar*, but it is of good omen and signifies the coming of a champion to maintain the queen's innocence by battle.⁶⁵ All things considered, the dream in *Willie o Douglas Dale* is likewise of good omen.⁶⁶

Omens. In English and Scottish traditional poetry omens virtually always portend disaster. One's horse stumbling over a stone, nose-bleed, buttons flying off, rings breaking, bursting, or dropping from the fingers, beginning a journey in a rain, the heel coming off the shoe — all these foreshadow death. Stumbling over a stone as portentous of misfortune occurs in Scott's text of *Lady Maisry*,⁶⁷ in the Percy text of *Jock o the Side*,⁶⁸ and in five of the Child versions of *Lord Derwentwater*.⁶⁹ Version A of this last-named piece reads:

They had not rode a mile but one,
Till his horse fell owre a stane:
"It's warning gude enech," my lord Dunwaters said,
"Alive I'll neer come hame."

As the story shows, the unfortunate lord's reading of the omen is correct. The stone omen occurs in only one text of *Jock o the Side*, but in other versions there is talk of fey folk.⁷⁰ The omen in *Lady Maisry* is probably borrowed from *Lord Derwentwater*.⁷¹ The foregoing token, sign, or omen is seen to be especially significant when we recall the ancient and widespread belief in the magic character of stones, a belief excellently illustrated for balladry in retributive stone metamorphoses in *The Maid and the Palmer*⁷² as well as in

⁶⁴ No. 118, sts. 3, 4.

⁶⁵ No. 59 A 18 ff., 31. On the occurrence of dreams of this character see Child, II, 33 n.

⁶⁶ No. 101 B 3, 4; C 1, 2.

⁶⁷ No. 65 J 13 (Child, IV, 466).

⁶⁸ No. 187 A 36.

⁶⁹ No. 208 A, E, F, I, J.

⁷⁰ See *supra*, p. 59.

⁷¹ See Child, IV, 466 a.

⁷² No. 21 A, B.

other ballad incidents.⁷³ It is possible that evil magic is at work in one copy of *The Twa Sisters*, according to which the murderess expressly asks her intended victim to stand upon a stone.⁷⁴

Nose-bleed as an ill omen is found in six of the Child texts of *Lord Derwentwater*,⁷⁵ in one version of *The Mother's Malison*, and in a single copy of *Lady Maisry*.⁷⁶ The first stanza of *The Mother's Malison* gives ample warning of the tragedy to come:⁷⁷

Willie stands in his stable-door,
And clapping at his steed,
And looking oer his white fingers
His nose began to bleed.

Such tokens are enough, cries Lord Derwentwater, to show "that I shall never return."⁷⁸ In *Jellon Grame* the ominous bleeding at the nose comes improperly, it seems, after, rather than before, the deed of horror.⁷⁹ But the bleeding here, as in *The Laird o Drum*,⁸⁰ may be caused simply by overwrought

⁷³ A stone figures in a chastity test in *Willie o Winsbury* (100 A 4 f.). There is reference to the sacramental marriage stone in Greig's variant of *Young Berchan* (53), *Folk-Song of the North-East*, art. LXXVIII, text A. There may be something of stone magic in the following instances: Just before she meets her murderer, the lady in *Lamkin* (93 A, D, H, I, J, M, N, Q) "steppit on a stane." A purse of gold is told on a stone in *The Knight and the Shepherd's Daughter* (110 F 32). About to be hanged, two brothers in *The Clerk's Twa Sons o Owsenford* (72 C 39) are required to lay their black hats "down on a stone." Petrification is the fate of the elves in the Danish ballad *Saint Olave's Voyage* as well as of the witch in the same piece "And froze the swarthy Elves to stone;" "Thou hag of Scone, stand there and turn to granite stone." (Translation by Prior, *Ancient Danish Ballads*, I, 360; cf. the ballad *Rosmer*, *ibid.*, III, 56, 60.)

⁷⁴ No. 10 F. See also G and H. One or both of the sisters stand on a "stane" in B, C, E, M, O, Q.

⁷⁵ No. 208 B, D, E, F, H, I. So in a variant in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, III, pp. 270 f. "Three drops of blood fell from his nose." "That's token enough," he said, "that I never no more shall return." Cf. the three drops of Saint Paul's blood and their life-giving virtue in *Leesome Brand* (15 A 44 ff.). On nose-bleed as a death omen see W. Gregor, *Folk-Lore of the North-East of Scotland*, p. 204.

⁷⁶ No. 65 J 12 (Child, IV, 466).

⁷⁷ No. 216 C 1.

⁷⁸ No. 208 E 9.

⁷⁹ No. 90 D 4.

⁸⁰ No. 236 B.

feelings. In the latter song a young man falls so deeply in love that his "nose began to bleed."

Buttons flying off his coat warn Lord Montgomery in the song of *Lamkin* that all is "undone" at home: ⁸¹

Lord Montgomery sate in England
drinking with the king;
The buttons flew off his coat,
all in a ring

"God prosper, God prosper
my lady and son!
For before I get home
they will all be undone.

That the buttons fly off "all in a ring" may be not without import. It is possibly a hint of that circle magic which finds practitioners everywhere and of which our balladry gives an occasional striking example.⁸²

Certainly something of circle magic must be implied in the evil omen of rings dropping, breaking, or bursting from the fingers, as in six of the Child copies of *Lord Derwentwater*,⁸³ in two versions of *Lamkin*, and in *Bonny Bee Hom*. In this last piece, however, as we shall see presently, the divinatory power seems to reside in the "ruby stone" rather than in the ring. Motherwell's text of *Lamkin* reads: ⁸⁴

"I wish a' may be weel
with my lady at hame;
For the rings of my fingers
they're now burst in twain!" ⁸⁵

The modern betrothal or marriage ring — regarded now as symbolical — survives doubtless from an early and primitive

⁸¹ No. 93 E 23. Cf. D: "the silver buttons of my coat they will not stay on;" H: "the buttons on my waistcoat they winna bide on." Silver buttons fly off the murderer's coat in *Jellon Grame* (90 D 4) but, if we follow the order of the ballad story in this fragmentary text, this incident is not to be taken as an omen.

⁸² See especially the magic circle made with holy water in *Tam Lin* (39 D 17, G 32), and the circumambulation of the hill in *The Broomfield Hill* (43 C 7).

⁸³ No. 208 B, D, E, F, H, I.

⁸⁴ No. 93 B 23.

⁸⁵ Cf. the ballad commonplaces: breaking sword in splinters three — no. 58 K 4, L 18; heart bursting in three — nos. 41 A 30; 48, st. 29; 49 E 18; 256, st. 10; back breaking in three — nos. 5 F 46; 64 A 27

marriage custom, according to which by some ceremony of the actual binding of one party by the other the magical union of the two was insured. We would not, of course, attribute a high antiquity to our ballad or its ring omen,⁸⁶ but this very probable origin of our "symbolical" marriage ring lends significance to the foregoing ballad incident.

The cumulative suggestion of the three omens⁸⁷ in *Lord Derwentwater* heightens the tragedy of the little story:⁸⁸

He set his foot in the level stirrup,
And mounted his bonny grey steed;
The gold rings from his fingers did break,
And his nose began for to bleed.

He had not ridden past a mile or two,
When his horse stumbled over a stone;
"These are tokens enough," said my lord Derwentwater,
"That I shall never return."

In *Bonny Bee Hom*,⁸⁹ as well as in *Hind Horn*,⁹⁰ occurs an incident more or less in the nature of an omen. His lady gives Bee Hom a chain of "gowd" and a ring with a ruby stone. Should this ring fade or fail or the stone "change its hue," Bee Hom is to know that his lady is "dead and gone" or has proved faithless. Absent from his lady for but a twelvemonth and a day, Bee Hom looks upon the stone and finds that it has grown "dark and gray." Thereupon he dies, his heart split in twain. According to text B, also, the ring signifies that the lady has died. Not only does the ring turn "black and ugly," but the stone bursts "in three."

⁸⁶ An exact parallel to our ballad omen is reported by William Henderson in his *Folk-Lore of the Northern Counties*, p. 42: "The breaking of the ring forbodes death. This belief holds ground as far south as Essex, where, in 1857, a farmer's widow, on being visited after her husband's death, exclaimed, 'Ah! I thought I would soon lose him, for I broke my ring the other day; and my sister, too, lost her husband after breaking her ring—it is a sure sign.'"

The foregoing incident goes no little way to prove that our ballads offer a faithful transcript of actual belief and custom.

⁸⁷ No. 208 E 8 f. All three omens occur in a text in G. B. Gardiner and Gustav von Holst, *Folk-Songs of England*, ed. Cecil Sharp, Book III, p. 5. In the tragic song of *Lady Mairry* (65 J 12 f.) we find three omens: buttons flying off, nose-bleed, and stumbling over a stone.

⁸⁸ The efficacy of the number three in folklore needs no comment.

⁸⁹ No. 92 A 7 f.

⁹⁰ No. 17 A 4 f., B 2 f., C 3 f., D 4 f., F 5 f., etc.

A diamond ring in *Hind Horn* has similar divinatory powers. Version A, a Motherwell text, reads:

She's gien to him a diamond ring,
With seven bright diamonds set therein.

"When this ring grows pale and wan,
You may know by it my love is gane."

One day as he looked his ring upon,
He saw the diamonds pale and wan

It is very possible that the ring incident in the foregoing pieces represents for balladry an even more striking, if not a more primitive idea, than that of divination or omens. It may be a survival of the belief in the life-token or index—this especially in *Bonny Bee Hom* where the discoloration and bursting of the stone are concomitant, we may well suppose, with the death of the lady.⁹¹

The Shropshire version of *Lord Derwentwater* furnishes our sole example of the belief that beginning a journey in rain betokens misfortune:⁹²

He had not gone but half a mile
When it began to rain;
"Now this is a token," his lordship said,
"That I shall not return again."

According to the tragic song of *Mary Hamilton*, it is premonitory of death for the heel to come off one's shoe:⁹³

When she gaed up the Parliament stair,
The heel cam aff her shee;
And lang or she cam down again
She was condemnd to dee.

In a Motherwell copy the "lap cam aff her shoe;"⁹⁴ in Scott's copy "the corks frae her heels did flee."⁹⁵

Where there are no visible signs to tell the ballad actor of impending misfortune we occasionally find audible warnings

⁹¹ Cf. E. S. Hartland, *The Legend of Perseus*, II, 26, 27 n.

⁹² No. 208 H 8.

⁹³ No. 173 A 9. Cf. the "left-foot shee" employed in witchcraft in *Willie's Lady* (6).

⁹⁴ C 12.

⁹⁵ I 17.

or boding voices, as in Laing's version of *Lord Lovel*. A "boding voice" prepares the hero to meet his dead sweet-heart:⁹⁶

He hadna been in London town
A week but only three,
Whan a boding voice thirld in his ear⁹⁷
That Scotland he maun see.

In Buchan's text of *Jellon Grame* a warning voice is not heeded and May-a-Roe goes to her cruel death.⁹⁸ The uncanny notes of Lord Barnard's horn warn Little Musgrave to be away: "Me thinks I heare Lord Barnettts horne, away, Musgreue, away!"⁹⁹ With the false true-love herself, one hears "every jow that the dead-bell" gives, as it cries "Woe to Barbara Allan!"¹⁰⁰

Among those signs and portents in English balladry that remain to be surveyed two belong to sailors' superstitions. According to *Sir Patrick Spens*, it is a fearful portent when the new moon is seen "wi the auld moone in hir arme":¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ No. 75 C 5.

⁹⁷ In version D, "a strange fancy;" B, "languishing thoughts," E, "lover-like thought," in American variants. Campbell and Sharp, *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, p. 71, "Strange thoughts rolled through his mind;" Louise Pound, *American Ballads and Songs*, p. 6, "wondering thoughts came over him;" Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South*, p. 79, "languishing thought;" p. 81, "something came over his mind." One of Cox's variants, p. 80, seems to have borrowed the ring and bleeding omens from *Lord Derwentwater* (208; see *supra*, pp. 71 f.). Cox's text reads:

Till a ring busted off his little finger,
And his nose began to bleed.

⁹⁸ No. 90 C 4 ff. Cf. the silver buttons flying off and the nose-bleed in D 4.

⁹⁹ *Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard* (81 B 6). The horn is present in all other texts except D. Cf. an American text, *J A F L*, XXX, 314 ff.: "And every note it seems to say, arise, arise, and go!" Cf. the magic elf horns in *The Elfin Knight* (2 A 1, B 1, etc.) and *Lady Isabel and the Elf-Knight* (4 A 1 f.).

¹⁰⁰ *Bonny Barbara Allan* (84 A 8, B 10). In an American text, Campbell and Sharp, *op cit.*, p. 96, "small birds" are substituted for the bells. But talking and helpful birds are quite common in English balladry; see especially *The Bromfield Hill* (43 A 11 f., C 21 f., D 12 f., etc.); *The Gay Goshawk* (96); *Johnie Cock* (114 B 13, H 21).

¹⁰¹ No. 58 A 7.

"Late late yestreen I saw the new moone,¹⁰²
 Wi the auld moone in hir arme,
 And I feir, I feir, my deir master,
 That we will cum to harme."

This same ballad, as does also the song of *The Mermaid*, preserves the well-known superstition that it is fatal to catch sight of a mermaid. The sea-witch has in her hand the traditional glass and comb:¹⁰³

Up started the mermaid by our ship,
 Wi the glass and the comb in her hand:
 "Reek about, reek about, my merrie men,
 Ye are not far from land."

"You lie, you lie, you pretty mermaid,
 Sae loud as I hear you lie;
 For since I have seen your face this nicht,
 The land I will never see."

No less ominous is the presence of the merfay in *The Mermaid*,¹⁰⁴ and Clerk Colvill in the ballad of that name owes his death to the sea-maiden whom he has forsaken.¹⁰⁵

Upon his death a knight's hounds howl on the leash and the horses go wild in their stables.¹⁰⁶ This howling of the hounds illustrates a familiar portent.¹⁰⁷ There is good reason for thinking that the ballad commonplace of looking over one's left shoulder is descriptive in certain instances, at least, of an act that carries with it something of evil portent.¹⁰⁸ Thus in *Earl Brand*, that fine ballad in which occurs the incident of dead-naming, it is with evil omen that Lord William

¹⁰² This incident occurs in all the Child versions except D and the fragmentary texts L-R.

¹⁰³ No. 58 L 2 f. The mermaid is found also in J, P, Q.

¹⁰⁴ No. 289 A, B, C, D, E. In F the mermaid is supplanted by the "kemp o the ship," but this seems to be nothing more than a burlesque variation. See Child, V, 148. Cf. four texts in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, III, 47 ff.; also a text, *J A F L*, XXV, 176.

¹⁰⁵ No. 42.

¹⁰⁶ *Lord Thomas Stuart* (259, st. 11).

¹⁰⁷ The whining, barking, or howling of the hound is a sign that the dead are abroad in the Danish ballad of *Svend Dyring*. See translation, Prior, *Ancient Danish Ballads*, I, 370 f. On the howling of dogs as a death-omen see W. Henderson, *Northern Counties*, p. 48.

¹⁰⁸ For a discussion of this incident and its significance see H. Bateson, "Looking over the Left Shoulder," *Folk-Lore*, XXXIV, 241 f.; Child, *Ballads*, V, 286; Gummere, *Popular Ballad*, p. 300.

looks back over his left shoulder, for so he sees his stolen bride's vengeful relatives: ¹⁰⁹

Lord Willham lookit oer his left shoulder,
To see what he could see,
And there he spy'd her seven brethren bold,¹¹⁰
Come riding over the lee.

In *Northumberland Betrayed by Douglas* "the ladye looked ouer her left sholder; in a dead swoone there fell shee." ¹¹¹ Told that he must die, Dickie, in another ballad, "looked oer his left shoulder." ¹¹² Disaster, certain or at least possible, is sighted over the left shoulder in *Archie o Cawfield*.¹¹³ Hughie Grame, condemned to die, looked over his left shoulder, and was "aware of his auld father, came tearing his hair most piteouslie." ¹¹⁴ The king has passed sentence of death upon Johnie Armstrong. Johnie thereupon looks over his left shoulder, "what a greivous look looked hee!" ¹¹⁵ It is over his left shoulder that the king in *The Lochmaben Harper* gives a command that turns out to his own disadvantage.¹¹⁶ We should remember in this connection that it is with the young wife's left-foot shoe that evil magic is worked in *Willie's Lady*.¹¹⁷ It is upon looking over her left shoulder

¹⁰⁹ No. 7 B 4. See also A 21, E 1, G 14 (Child, I, 490), I 3 (Child, I, 492), and the text, Child, IV, 444, st. 11. See also text, Gavin Greig, *Folk-Song of the North-East*, art. LVII.

¹¹⁰ The traditional "seven brethren" of English balladry; for their occurrence in our folksong see Child, V, 490: "Numbers, favorite." And on the "ae sister" and the many brothers see the note, Gummere, "The Mother-in-Law," *Kittredge Anniversary Papers*, p. 17, n. 3.

¹¹¹ No. 176, st. 37. See Mary's feat of divination or second sight in this piece, sts. 18 ff., and note that the knight must stand at her "right hand."

¹¹² No. 185, st. 35.

¹¹³ No. 188 A 32.

¹¹⁴ No. 191 C 13; also A 19, E 18, H 10 (Child, IV, 519), I 9 (Child, IV, 520), and the text, Child, IV, 518, st. 9. It is noteworthy that in A 21 looking over the "right shoulder" gives the same vision of sorrow, with the exception that it is the mother and not the father who is seen. On the whole, the "right shoulder" in st. 21 is not to be taken very seriously. The balladist was no doubt led to make the change from "left" to "right" for no other reason than that of the avoidance of repetition, just as we find the color triad of horses in certain ballads.

¹¹⁵ No. 169 A 11, B 13.

¹¹⁶ No. 192 A 8, B 4, D 6. The king also looks over his left shoulder in no. 156 A 20, D 20, F 24, and but for the king's oath this look bodes ill for Earl Martial. See also no 167 A 7.

¹¹⁷ No. 6.

that the maiden in *Clerk Saunders* discovers the reason her love sleeps so "soun": "An she lookd ovr her left shoulder, an the blood about them ran."¹¹⁸ The "right hand" seems in balladry to be of good omen. Willie must stand at Janet's right side during her travail,¹¹⁹ and in another ballad an inscription is on a new-born son's right hand.¹²⁰ The wounded maiden in *The King's Dochter Lady Jean* tries to staunch her blood with the glove from her right hand.¹²¹

Death Taboos. British folksong preserves the superstition that contact with the dead will result fatally. This belief is brought out clearly in *The Unquiet Grave*, *Sweet William's Ghost*, and *The Twa Brothers*.¹²² In these pieces the revenant is corporeal and not to be thought of as the familiar airy and unsubstantial shade.¹²³ The dead man in *The Unquiet Grave* thus warns his sweetheart: ¹²⁴

"You crave one kiss of my clay-cold lips; ¹²⁵
But my breath smells earthy strong;
If you have one kiss of my clay-cold lips,
Your time till not be long."

In *Thomas Rymer* ¹²⁶ English balladry records the widespread belief that it is likewise dangerous to hold any sort of commerce with fairy folk. By kissing the fairy queen Thomas places himself in her power.¹²⁷ In *Fair Margaret and Sweet*

¹¹⁸ No. 69, st. 12 (Child, IV, 469). Cf. no. 53 A 21.

¹¹⁹ No. 64 B 6. It is true that this song ends unhappily.

¹²⁰ No. 5 C 85, E 31. For other references to the right hand see nos. 43 A 7; 65 I 7; 53 E 12; 100 A 11, etc.; 98 A 16; 8 B 5. Steed breathes flame from right nostril, no. 39 G 36. Tam Lin's right hand will be gloved, his left bare, no. 39 A 30.

¹²¹ No. 52 B 11.

¹²² Nos. 78 (all the Child texts); 77 A, B, C, E; 49 B.

¹²³ See *supra*, p. 67, note 52.

¹²⁴ A 5.

¹²⁵ This commonplace occurs in variants of *The Unquiet Grave* recovered since Child: Sharp and Marson, *Folk Songs from Somerset*, First Series, p. 14; Leather, *Folk-Lore of Herefordshire*, pp. 202 f.; *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, I, 119, 192; II, 6 ff.; Sharp, *One Hundred English Folksongs*, pp. 56 f. It occurs also in two American variants of *The Twa Brothers*: Campbell and Sharp, *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, pp. 35 f.

¹²⁶ No. 37 C 5, 6. Cf. sts. 17-21 in the related romance, Child, I, 327, and another text of the ballad, Child, IV, 455, sts. 6 ff. Kissing may effect disenchantment of a transformed mortal, according to *Kemp Owyne* (34).

¹²⁷ On the effects of holding commerce with Otherworld beings see Schambach and Müller, *Niedersächsische Sagen und Märchen*, p. 373.

William and Lord Thomas and Fair Annet we have, it is probable, further evidence that the living man touches the dead at his peril. In the former piece kissing the dead seems to be, at any rate, a mark of exceeding devotion: ¹²⁸

"I'll do more for thee, Margaret,
Than any of thy kin;
For I will kiss thy pale wan lips,
Tho a smile I cannot win."

As for the latter song, a sentimental interpretation might ascribe Willie's death to grief, but another reading might well insist that his prediction that he would "never kiss woman again" arose from his having kissed the "bonny cheek" of his dead love.¹²⁹

By what appears to be a bit of rationalization, the maiden in *The Suffolk Miracle* is said to die of terror and grief. But in the original form of the ballad it is possible that her death was due to the workings of sympathetic magic. In the ballad as it stands the ghost lover complains of a headache.¹³⁰ The maiden binds her handkerchief about his head:

But as they did this great haste make,¹³¹
He did complain his head did ake;
Her handkerchief she then took out,
And tyed the same his head about.

Subsequently, the corpse of the lover is disinterred, and "though he had a month been dead, this kerchief was about his head," and the lady follows him to the grave. It is well known that it is dangerous to allow the dead to gain possession of one's effects, such as an article of dress. In view of this superstition is it not probable that the maiden's death is the result of her imprudence in tying her handkerchief about her dead lover's head? According to two American texts of our ballad, the maiden kisses her dead lover, an incident absent from the Child texts:

¹²⁸ No. 74 A 13.

¹²⁹ No. 73 E 40.

¹³⁰ Child can make no sense of the headache (*Ballads*, V, 59).

¹³¹ No. 272, st. 14.

A handkerchief she pulled out ¹³²
And around his head she tied it about,
And kissed his lips and thus did say:
My dear, you're colder than the clay.

This incident and that of the handkerchief lend plausibility to the interpretation that the death of the maiden was caused by something more than mere terror and grief. It is noteworthy in this connection that in *Clerk Colvill* the hero owes his death in part, at least, to his binding about his aching head a "gare" of the merfay's "sark." ¹³³

Allied with the foregoing belief that physical contact with the dead may prove fatal is the superstition that it is dangerous to allow an enemy to gain possession of one's name. By reference to Norse analogues of *The Douglas Tragedy* we find that Earl Brand owes his death to the indiscretion of his sweetheart in revealing his name to her kinsmen. Thus in the Danish ballad *Ribold and Guldberg* Ribold enjoins his stolen bride:

"Now if in fight you see me fall,¹³⁴
My name I pray you not to call.

"And if you see the blood run red,
Be silent, lest you name me dead."

Ribold slays Truid and her father, but when he sets upon her brothers, the maiden cries:

"Stop, stop, Ribolt, o stay thy hand,
And sheathe I pray thy murderous brand."

The moment Guldberg named his name,
A fatal blow, the deathblow came.

The ballad of *Erlinton*, closely related to *The Douglas Tragedy*, also receives light from the Danish piece:

¹³² Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, pp. 130, 132.

¹³³ No. 42 A 7 ff.; B 6 ff. Child seems not to have noticed the striking resemblance between the headache in this piece and that in *The Suffolk Miracle*. It is true that the situation in one song is somewhat the reverse of that in the other, but the general idea underlying the two incidents is doubtless the same.

¹³⁴ Translation by Prior, *Ancient Danish Ballads*, II, 403.

He lighted aff his milk-white steed,¹³⁵
 An gae his lady him by the head,
 Sayn, "See ye dmna change your cheer,
 Untill ye see my body bleed."

American variants of the British ballads do not always preserve folklore elements well, but as regards the dead-naming incident in *The Douglas Tragedy*,¹³⁶ a Campbell and Sharp text of this piece seems to come nearer the original telling than do the Child versions:

She got down and never spoke,¹³⁷
 Nor never cheaped
 Till she saw her own father's head
 Come trinkling by her feet.

The following is the best reading from the Child texts:

An bad her never change her cheer¹³⁸
 Untill she saw his body bleed.

It is possible that name magic finds further exemplification in the heroic ballad of the *Cheviot*. In response to Douglas' command, "Tell me whos men ye ar," Percy replies:

"We wyll not tell the whoys men we ar," he says,¹³⁹
 "nor whos men *that* we be,"

The same motive, grounded possibly in the superstition of name-avoidance, actuates Child Waters when he gives careful instructions regarding the secrecy of his name:

"You must tell noe man what is my name;¹⁴⁰
 My ffootpage then you shall be."

¹³⁵ No. 8 A 15. Cf. B 14, C 24, and a variant of B (Child, I, 111).

¹³⁶ No. 7 A 22 f., B 5, C 3 f., D 3, E 4, A b, c 22, and the text, Child, IV, 444, st. 27.

¹³⁷ *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, p. 11; cf. texts, *ibid.*, pp. 13, 15: "And never changed a word." Variants in Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South*, p. 18, and Greig, *Folk-Song of the North-East*, art. LVII, read: "And never shed a tear."

¹³⁸ Child, IV, 444, st. 27.

¹³⁹ No. 162 A 16. B 19 reads: "We list not to declare nor shew whose men wee bee."

¹⁴⁰ No. 63 A 10. This direction is absent from the other Child versions. The power of the name is excellently illustrated in *Riddles Wisely Expounded* (1 C 19). A riddle-mongering fiend is driven off when a maiden calls him by his right name "Clootie".

As sune as she the fiend did name,
 He flew awa in a blazing flame.

The incident of the fiend's vanishing in a flame is preserved in a text in Alfred Williams, *Folk Songs of the Upper Thames*, p. 37.

By keeping his name secret the ballad actor in so far protects his life and stays off death. Moreover, he is aware, it seems, of the early and primitive belief that death itself should not be mentioned by name. In speaking of death the balladist occasionally resorts to euphemistic or periphrastic expressions. The song of *Fair Margaret and Sweet William* offers a clear case of the euphemistic manner of mentioning death. Margaret cannot survive Sweet William's preference for another. The ballad does not, however, say that she is dead but that "she's gone":

There was a fair maid at that window,¹⁴¹
She's gone, she'll come no more there.

In *The Wife of Usher's Well* death is similarly suggested by periphrasis. Word came to the carline wife that "her three sons were gane," that "her sons she'd never see."¹⁴² The periphrasis is more elaborate in *The Clerk's Twa Sons o Owsenford*. The two sons have just been hanged and the father reports their death in this fashion:

"It's I've putten them to a deeper lair,¹⁴³
An to a higher schule;
Yere ain twa sons ill no be here
Till the hallow days o Yule."

The brother-lover in *The King's Dochter Lady Jean* does not say that he will die. He puts his prediction in this way:

"O sister dear, when thou gaes hame¹⁴⁴
Unto thy father's ha,
It's make my bed baith braid and lang,
Wi the sheets as white as snaw."

What appear to be further instances of death euphemisms occur in *Johnie Cock*, *The Battle of Otterburn*, *The Battle of*

¹⁴¹ No. 74 C 2. Cf. A 4: "But never more did come there;" B 6: "She went out from her bowr alive, but never so more came there." Cf. American texts, Cox, *op. cit.*, pp. 65 ff., A 4, B 4, C 4, etc.: "That was nevermore seen there;" Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, p. 68: "Lady Margret was heard no more."

¹⁴² No. 79 A 2, 3.

¹⁴³ No. 72 A 16. W. M. Hart in his *Ballad and Epic*, p. 22 n., considers periphrasis in the English ballads.

¹⁴⁴ No. 52 B 12.

Harlaw, *Sir Hugh*, and *Clerk Colvill*.¹⁴⁵ It should be borne in mind, however, that though the ballad is occasionally given to periphrasis for death or for love and marriage¹⁴⁶ it employs with great frequency the words "dying," "death," and "dead." Nevertheless, the foregoing expressions are not to be explained away as mere poetic conceits.¹⁴⁷ Though the evidence is somewhat vestigial, they seem to reflect the early and primitive attitude of fear toward death and the attempt of man to guard himself against this experience by avoiding the very mention of the name by which it is designated.

The Test for Death and the Return to Life. In the ballad of *The Gay Goshawk* a maiden simulates death in order to win her way to her lover in Scotland.¹⁴⁸ But before the funeral procession sets out for the far-distant burial ground the heroine is subjected to a test for death, an ordeal through which she passes successfully. The conductress of the ceremony varies according to different versions of the ballad. In a Motherwell version the test, applied at the suggestion of

¹⁴⁵ In *Johnie Cock* (114 A 20 f., B 13, L), *Otterburn* (161 A 67), *Harlaw* (163 A 25, Ab 25) the phrases "fetch away," "fette away," "took awa," and "sleepin." In *Sir Hugh* (155 A 10): "When every lady gat hame her son, the Lady Maisry gat nane." In *Clerk Colvill* (42 A 13; cf. B 10): "brither, unbend my bow, 't will never be bent by me again." Cf. *Lord Randal* (12 A): "And I fain wad lie down;" another text, Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, p. 23: "the cause of my lying down." "Bed" for grave is common in the ballads, as in nos. 7 B 16, C 15; 77 B 14. See the figure of the sheath and knife in nos. 15 and 16, and the beautiful evasions in *The Twa Brothers* (49). On this last see Child, I, 436. In no. 214 B 10, D 10, I 11: "sleepin soun" for dead. See also no. 196 C 17.

¹⁴⁶ For love (91 B 2): "She pleasd hersel in Levieston;" for pregnancy see nos. 63 A; 65 H; 100 A, C, D; 101 A, B, D (Child, V, 236); 102 A; 269 C. No. 101 A reads.

"O narrow, narrow's my gown, Willy,
That wont to be sae wide;
An short, short is my coats, Willy,
That wont to be sae side."

An interesting kenning is "horse of tree" for bridge (187 A 13).

¹⁴⁷ The expressions "putten down" and "gae down" are used with reference to death by hanging or death by violence in nos. 72 C 39; 173 I 15; 191 C 6, 7, E 11, and text, Child, IV, 518, st. 2; 194 C 12; 200 A 10, F 13. Cf. text of no. 191 in Gavin Greig, *Last Leaves of Traditional Ballads and Ballad Airs*, ed. Alexander Keith, p. 118, st. 2.

¹⁴⁸ In *Willie's Lyke-Wake* (25) a young man feigns death in order to capture a maiden.

an "auld witch-wife," consists in dropping burning lead on the chin, the breast, and the toe of the maiden: ¹⁴⁹

Out then spoke an auld witch-wife,
And she spoke random indeed:
Honoured madam, I would have you to try
Three drops of the burning lead.

Her mother went weeping round and round,
She dropped one on her chin;
"Och and alace," her mother did say,
"There is no breath within!"

The lead is no more efficacious when dropped on the breast and the toe. In two versions the mother performs the rite, ¹⁵⁰ in other copies "the cruel step-minnie." ¹⁵¹ But mother and stepmother are substitutions doubtless for the "witch-wife" who appears in the better versions. ¹⁵² In one copy the test consists in rubbing red lead on the clever maiden's chin and toe:

"Bring to me the red, red lead, ¹⁵³
And rub it on her chin;
It's Oh and alace for my dochter Janet!
But there is not a breath within.

"Bring to me the red, red lead,
And rub it on her toe;
It's Oh and alace for my daughter Janet!
To Scotland she must go."

"The 'red, red lead' of D 7, 8," says Child, "I had at first supposed to show a carelessness about epithets, like the 'roses blue' of a Danish ballad. But considering that the

¹⁴⁹ No. 96 B 12 f.

¹⁵⁰ D, F.

¹⁵¹ G, E (Child, II, 367 b). The stepmother is a wicked character in English ballads. She places her stepchildren under monstrous enchantments in nos. 31, st. 46 ff.; 32 (Child, I, 300, st. 20); 34; 36; and in *Tam Lin* (39 G 25) she ill-sains the hero, so that he falls an easy prey to the fairies.

¹⁵² B 12 f., C 22. In G 37 the maiden's "youngest brither." With the witch in this piece compare the witch-woman in *The Broomfield Hill* (43) who exercises her magic in a somewhat contrary direction. She instructs a maiden (A 4 ff., C 6 ff.) in the method of putting her lover to sleep by magic devices.

¹⁵³ D 7 f. Hot lead is used in C 22, G 38, E (Child, I, 367); boiling lead, F 3, H 22 f.; "burning red gowd," E 27.

red lead is to be *rubbed on*, one may ask whether some occult property of minimum may have been known to the mother."¹⁵⁴ It is interesting to compare with our ballad test an incident in Jamieson's *Child Rowland*, part ballad, part tale. The hero's two brothers are revived from their magic sleep by the elf-king: "The King of Elfland then produced a small crystal phial containing a bright red liquor, with which he anointed the lips, nostrils, eye-lids, ears, and finger-ends of the two young men, who immediately awoke."¹⁵⁵

In the ballad of *Leesome Brand*, a song with several primitive traits, three drops of Saint Paul's blood effect restoration to life. This is the only incident of its kind in the British ballads unless we include the miracle of the roasted cock re-animated in *St. Stephen and Herod*.¹⁵⁶ Leesome Brand's lady and son lie dead. But his mother is, like other ballad mothers, learned in magic, whether of the black or of the white variety,¹⁵⁷ and she tells her bereaved son how to proceed:¹⁵⁸

He put his hand at her bed head,
And there he found a gude grey horn,
Wi three draps o' Saint Paul's ain blude,
That had been there sin he was born.

Then he drappd twa on his ladye,
And ane o them on his young son,
And now they do as lively be,
As the first day he brought them hame.

The number three in the foregoing procedure is, of course, an illustration of the widespread use of this number in magical operations.¹⁵⁹ That the blood is said to be Saint Paul's

¹⁵⁴ *Ballads*, II, 357 n. On tests for death in popular fiction see *ibid*, II, 357; III, 517 b; V, 6, 296. See also Elton-Powell, *Saxo*, pp. lxxx f.

¹⁵⁵ Jamieson, *Illustrations of Northern Antiquities*, p. 403.

¹⁵⁶ No. 22.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. the man's mother in *Willie's Lady* (6) and *Gil Brenton* (5). In the former piece the mother, "a vile rank witch," employs evil magic in the obstruction of childbirth. In *Gil Brenton* the hero's mother tests the chastity of her son's brides by making them sit in a golden chair. An excellent, though fragmentary, text of *Willie's Lady* is recorded in Greig, *Last Leaves of Traditional Ballads*, pp. 4 f.

¹⁵⁸ No. 15 A 44 ff.

¹⁵⁹ Three is by far the most popular number in British balladry.

may be merely another instance of the intrusion of Christian belief in balladry.¹⁶⁰ Saint Paul is not mentioned in an excellent Aberdeenshire text of this ballad recovered by Gavin Greig:¹⁶¹

He's done him to his mother's bed-head,
An' found a horn had hung lang,
An' there he found three draps o bleed
That had hung there since one was born.

He drappit twa on his lady gay,
An' ane upon his little young son,
An' he fan them as life-livin
As the first hour that he got them.

The magical virtue of blood is well known and finds illustration in a number of our ballads.¹⁶² In certain Scandinavian ballads restoration from enchantment is effected by drinking blood.¹⁶³ It is probable that the source of the magical blood in *Leesome Brand* has some connection with childbirth. The line "That had been there sin he was born" seems to indicate this.

Before leaving this matter of restoration to life we ought to make mention of the magical ceremony in *Young Benjie* whereby a maiden's corpse is made to "thraw" and speak and in speaking to reveal the identity of the maiden's slayer:¹⁶⁴ But this incident we shall consider more in detail in connection with the wake.¹⁶⁵ The *Leesome Brand* motif of resuscitation suggests the whole matter of ghost lore in bal-

¹⁶⁰ Cf. *The Wife of Usher's Well* (79 C). In this text of our best ghost ballad the dead sons are made to return through the instrumentality of Jesus. See also *Tam Lin* (39 D 17, G 32). The "holy water" in these texts is probably a relic of the "primitive" water-bath in A 34, B 34. Cf. the absence, or the intrusive character, of Christian thought in Danish ballads, Johannes Steenstrup, *The Medieval Popular Ballad*, trans. E. G. Cox, pp. 179 f.

¹⁶¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 16 f.

¹⁶² For example, the superstition of the bleeding corpse, *Young Hunting* (68 B 21, C 23); indelible blood stains, *Babylon* (14 D), *The Cruel Mother* (20 Q); catching the blood of the slain, *Lamkin* (93 A, C, D, G, I, N, O, R, T, V, X), *Little Musgrave* (81 G 28, 30), *Sir Hugh* (155 F, H, J); drinking the blood of the slain, *The Braes o Yarrow* (214 E, F, G, M).

¹⁶³ Svend Grundtvig, *Danmarks gamle Folkeviser*, nos. 55, 58.

¹⁶⁴ No. 86.

¹⁶⁵ See *infra*, pp. 93 f.

ladry, since the *revenant* of British folksong is almost without question a living dead man or vitalized corpse.¹⁶⁶ Moreover, the incident of the singing-bone in *The Two Sisters*¹⁶⁷ is basically analogous to the talking corpse in *Young Benjie* and hardly less analogous is the incident of the talking bird in *Young Hunting* which betrays the hero's murderess and which is in all probability the form taken by the soul of the dead man. But such instances might easily lead us here into a discussion of transmigration and ideas of the soul as depicted in English folksong, particularly those transmigratory shapes through which the murderess in *The Cruel Mother* and the infanticide in *The Maid and the Palmer* must pass by way of doing penance.¹⁶⁸ Moreover, a consideration of those shapes assumed by the soul would lure us into a study of magical operations whereby a mortal held under some monstrous enchantment recovers his original form, as in *King Henry*, *Kemp Owyne*, *Allison Gross*, *The Laily Worm*, and *Tam Lin*.¹⁶⁹ Into these fascinating studies¹⁷⁰ we must not, however, permit ourselves to stray, for it is our purpose here to examine only those beliefs and usages that bear directly upon death and burial.

¹⁶⁶ See *supra*, p. 67, note 52.

¹⁶⁷ No. 10.

¹⁶⁸ Nos. 20 I, J, K, etc.; 21 A, B.

¹⁶⁹ Nos. 32, 34, 35, 36, 39; see also no. 31.

¹⁷⁰ On soul ideas in balladry see my study "Ideas of the Soul in the English and Scottish Popular Ballads," *Poet Lore*, XXXVI, no. 4.

IV BURIAL

Heralded by dreams, omens, and warning voices, death in balladry takes on various guises. If one would classify deaths, he can assemble for folksong more kinds than those enumerated in the poetic Edda when Sigdrifa thus counsels Sigurd: "Care thou for corpses, . . . be they sick-dead, or sea-dead, or weapon-dead."¹ But so far as the ballads are concerned, Sigdrifa's "sick-dead" may be left almost wholly out of account. There is weapon-death, however, on every hand — death in battle, at sea, in private feud, in affairs of honor, and by act of treachery or of vengeance. Such a death, as we have already seen, may be accompanied by the horrors of mutilation — severing the hands, the feet, the head, disfiguring the face, cutting off the breasts, cutting out the tongue and the heart. There is death by burning and drowning and death in child-bed, and the crimes committed by the woman who would appear a "leal maiden" give us infanticide, burial alive, and strangling. The "wee pen-knife" keeps company with deceitful epithet, for its wee-ness accomplishes vast tragedy. Suicide is exceedingly common and grief and madness take their toll.

Whatever the form in which death overtakes him, the ballad hero faces it bravely and generously. In unforgettable lines the dying Bewick directs his father to bury him and his "brother" in one grave, but to give his "bully Grahame" the "sun-side": "For I'm sure he's won the victory."² In lines no less memorable Lord Thomas beseeches Fair Annet to await him in her passing and then strikes the "dagger until his heart."³ But in his hatreds the dying hero is no less noble than in his loves, as witness those death-bed testaments in *Edward* and *Lord Randal* in which, with undying hatred, he wills to his enemies the fire of hell or the gallows rope,⁴

¹ Vigfusson-Powell, *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, I, 43.

² No. 211, st. 51. On distinctions in burial see *infra*, pp. 129 ff.

³ No. 73 A 28. These lines express belief in a future life.

⁴ Nos. 12, 13.

or again, as when Parcy Reed and Hughie Grame will the deed and the weapons of vengeance to their friends and kinsmen.⁵ Death is held in contempt by the ballad actor and he can die as courageously as Ragnar Lodbrok. "My life days are done," cries Ragnar. "Laughing I will die."⁶ Our hundred or more tragic ballads must not, however, with their arresting themes, be permitted to turn us aside from the purpose of the following pages, that of assembling the ballad materials that have to do with funerary practices. Under the general heading of burial we shall consider the "dead-bell," the wake, doles for the dead, the graveclothes, the coffin, and the bier, as well as mourning customs and the grave. Under this last we shall present such matters as the location and situation of the grave, orientation, double and triple burial, distinctions in burial, and burial of belongings with the dead.

The Dead-Bell. In the ballads funeral bells serve, apparently, a variety of purposes — the general purpose, as today, of ringing out the funeral, and the more special purposes of announcing the passing of the soul, proclaiming the wake, and accompanying the corpse to the grave. The ballad of *Sir Hugh* preserves the ancient and widespread incident of funeral bells that ring without "men's hands." This magic ringing of bells is sometimes regarded as a death omen but it seems not to have this significance in *Sir Hugh*.⁷ Our ballad trait recalls the bells that "ring of themselves" over Olaf's "coffin-bed."⁸ *Sir Hugh* reads:⁹

⁵ Nos. 193 B 41, 191 A 23, B 14.

⁶ Vigfusson-Powell, *C. P. B.*, II, 345.

⁷ On the occurrence of the incident of bells ringing of themselves see Child, I, 173, 231; III, 235, 519 f. See also Tatlock in *Modern Language Notes*, XXIX, 98, and Barry, *ibid.*, XXX, 28; E. M. Leather, *The Folk-Lore of Herefordshire*, p. 9.

⁸ Vigfusson-Powell, *op. cit.*, II, 161.

⁹ No. 155 A 17.

And a' the bells o merry Lincoln
 Without men's hands were rung,¹⁰
 And a' the books o merry Lincoln
 Were read without man's tongue,
 And neer was such a burial
 Sin Adam's days begun.

An even more curious and primitive example of the superstition with which church bells were formerly regarded¹¹ is found in the ballads of *The Cruel Mother* and *The Maid and the Palmer*. In both these songs of infanticide the murderess must, by way of penance, pass through certain transmigratory shapes. Among other shapes, the cruel mother must become a church bell¹² or a clapper in a bell,¹³ the period of each penance to last for seven years.¹⁴

The passing bell, rung immediately upon a person's death

¹⁰ Bells are rung backward as a signal of alarm in *Adam Bell* (116, st. 87): "And the belles backwards dyd they rynge." Cf. ringing bells backwards in revenge, Leather, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

¹¹ On the folklore of church bells see John Aubrey, *Remaines of Gentilisme and Judaisme*, ed. James Britten, pp. 19, 96, 131, 166; C. S. Burne, *Shropshire Folk-Lore*, pp. 600 ff.; E. M. Leather, *op. cit.*, pp. 160 ff., 168 ff.; William Henderson, *Folk-Lore of the Northern Counties*, pp. 61 ff.

¹² *The Cruel Mother* (20 I): "Seven years to be a church bell." Texts K and L read respectively, "Seven years to ring a bell;" "Seven lang years ye'll ring the bell." The penances in this piece, thinks Child (*Ballads*, I, 218), belong properly to *The Maid and the Palmer* (21). But Child may be wrong here. The transmigrations occur in excellent variants of *The Cruel Mother* recovered since Child; for example, Gavin Greig, *Last Leaves of Traditional Ballads*, pp. 21 f.; W. Roy Mackenzie, *The Quest of the Ballad*, pp. 104 ff. In Greig's text occur the fish, bird, and bell transformations: "Seven year a warnin bell."

¹³ *The Maid and the Palmer* (21 A 14). In a Norse ballad *Hildebrand and Hilde*, a maiden is bartered for a church bell, the first stroke of which breaks her mother's heart. See trans. Prior, *Ancient Danish Ballads*, II, 414.

¹⁴ In point of frequency of occurrence in British balladry the number seven is surpassed only by the number three. With reference to periods of time it is found in ballads of the supernatural; for example, in *Tam Lin* (39 A-D, G-K, M) and *Thomas Rymer* (37, Child, IV, 455, st. 18) the fairies at seven-year intervals "pay a tiend to hell." Hind Etin (41 A 9) keeps his earthly mistress in the enchanted wood for "six lang years and one." The seal-husband in *The Great Silkie of Sule Skerry* (Frank Sidgwick, *Popular Ballads of the Olden Time*, Second Series, pp. 235 ff.) will return in seven years. Ghosts return after seven years in nos. 77 F 1; 243 A 18, D 1, E 1, F 1. Cf. no. 48, st. 2. On the occurrence of this number in other ballads see Child, V, 490 a, at "Numbers."

or during his passing from life to death,¹⁵ is probably heard in *Bonny Barbara Allan*:¹⁶

She had not gane a mile but twa,¹⁷
When she heard the dead-bell ringing,
And every jow that the dead-bell geid,
It cry'd, Woe to Barbara Allan.

Church bells ring in *Lord Lovel* to announce the decease of Lady Ouncebell.¹⁸ The dead-bell knells in *The Earl of Aboyne* to summon the mourning nobles to "come and bury bonny Peggy Irvine."¹⁹ For Queen Jane "the bells were muffled, and mournful did play."²⁰ Neglect to toll the bell is intended as a mark of disrespect or of revenge in a Motherwell copy of *Fair Janet*:²¹

¹⁵ For a discussion, with illustrations from literature, of the passing bell, see Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, II, 202-220.

¹⁶ No. 84 A 8; cf. B 19, C 9.

¹⁷ The dead bell is found in American variants. *J A F L*, VI, 133; XIX, 285 ff., a, d, e, f; XX, 286; XXII, 63; XXIX, 161; Wyman and Brockway, *Lonesome Tunes*, p. 5; McGill, *Folk Songs of the Kentucky Mountains*, p. 39; Mackenzie, *Quest of the Ballad*, pp. 100 ff.; Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South*, pp. 96 ff. In Campbell and Sharp, *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, p. 94, text D, the bells are called "corpse bells;" in *ibid.*, p. 95, text E, "small birds" are substituted for the bells. In Miss McGill's text, *op. cit.*, p. 39, Barbara is rebuked by both "bells" and "birds." The dead bell is found also in a Scottish text, Greig, *Traditional Ballads*, p. 68.

¹⁸ No. 75, all the Child texts. A: "bells of the high chapel ring" with a "ceserera;" B: "sound o a fine chapel-bell;" C: "the bells they mak sic a sound;" D: "A dismal noise, for the church bells au did soun;" E, as in A: "a loud sassaray." "Ceserera" and "sassaray" are intended for an imitation of the sound of the bells. In H the bells are called "St. Pancras bells," as in Greig, *Traditional Ballads*, p. 57; *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, VI, 31; McGill, *op. cit.*, p. 10; but "St. Patrick's bells" in *J A F L*, XVIII, 291 ff., text A; Pound, *American Ballads and Songs*, p. 5; Greig, *Folk-Song of the North-East*, art. CLIX. On St. Pancras bells see C. S. Burne, *Folk-Lore*, XXII, 35.

¹⁹ No. 235 B 19.

²⁰ No. 170 D 5. F: "They churchd her, they chimed her, they dug her her grave." Cf. text of *Lamkin* (93), *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, I, 218: "The bells shall be muzzled to make a dismal sound where this lady and the baby lay dead upon the ground." On muffling bells see Brand, *op. cit.*, II, 219 f.

²¹ No. 64 B 20. Cf. E 18 "There's not a bell in Merrytown kirk etc." See also G 12.

Out and spak her ain bridegroom,
 And an angry man was he:
 "This day she has gien me the gecks,
 Yet she must bear the scorn;
 There's not a bell in merry Linkum
 Shall ring for her the morn."

In Buchan's text of *Lady Isabel and the Elf-Knight* the Other-world knight would ring the "common bell" for the eighth king's daughter and for those other seven maidens whom he has slain: ²²

"And I'll make you the eight o them,
 And ring the common bell."

Ringling the bell to announce the "lyke-wake" occurs in *Willie's Lyke-Wake*, which tells a story of counterfeited death. That there is a "principal bellman" indicates a number of bell-ringers. The "groat" shows that these functionaries were rewarded for their services:

"Ye'll gie the principal bellman a groat,²³
 And ye'll gar him cry your dead lyke-wake."

In Kinloch's version of our ballad the bellman is seen going from house to house: ²⁴

He gied the bellman his bell-groat,²⁵
 To ring his dead-bell at his lover's yett.

In *Clerk Saunders* and possibly in *The Lass of Roch Royal* we are to think of the dead-bell as accompanying the corpse through the town and to the grave. The former piece reads: ²⁶

²² No. 4 B 10.

²³ No. 25 B 5.

²⁴ According to Scott, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, ed. T. F. Henderson, III, 220, the passing bell, like the wake bell in our ballad, is rung throughout the town: "The custom of the passing bell is still kept up in many villages in Scotland. The sexton goes through the town, ringing a small bell, and announcing the death of the departed, and the time of the funeral." On the passing bell see also Prior, *Ancient Danish Ballads*, III, 67, 68 f.

²⁵ A 5. Cf. C 5: "And gie to the bellman a bellling-great, to ring the dead-bell at thy love's bower-yett."

²⁶ No. 69 A 23. G 29: "The bells went tinkling thro the town."

The bells gaed clinking throw the towne,²⁷
To carry the dead corps to the clay.

The Lyke-Wake.²⁸ The wake or night-watch with the dead,²⁹ cried in *Willie's Lyke-Wake* by the principal bellman, is an occasion for feasting and merrymaking.³⁰ Buchan's text of the foregoing ballad reflects a custom of actual life in the paradoxical phrase "merry mourners":³¹

Then they did conduct her into the ha,
Among the weepers and merry mourners a'

Doomed to die, the heroine in *Fair Mary of Wallington* bids her mother "come to her sickening, or her merry lake-wake."³² The lover in *The Lass of Roch Royal* may have the wake in mind or a subsequent merrymaking when he says:

"Be merry, merry, gentlemen,
Be merry at the bread and wine;
For by the morn at this time o day
You'll drink as much at mine."

That the wake is a period of lamentation and sorrowing, however, as well as of merrymaking, is seen in a Buchan copy of *Willie's Lyke-Wake* and in *Prince Robert*. In the former piece the burning of candles and torches at the wake³³ is noteworthy:

²⁷ In *The Lass of Roch Royal* (76 C 13) Lord Gregor is searching for his true-love:

The first kirktoon he cam to,
He heard the death-bell ring,
The second kirktoon he cam to,
He saw her corpse come in.

But it is not clear that we have here the dead-bell that is rung in procession with the corpse. Cf. *The Gay Goshawk* (96 A 24): "The firstun kirk that they came till, they gard the bells be rung." This is virtually as in texts C 20 f, E 31 f, G 40 f, and text, Child, IV, 483, 21 f. See also no. 76 B 24. A horn is blown in another text of no. 96, Child, IV, 484, after sts. 22 and 30. In a variant of *Lady Mairry* (65), Sharp and Marson, *Folk Songs from Somerset*, Third Series, p. 57, the lover returns too late and hears "a big bell toll."

²⁸ Called the "lake-wake" (91 A), "dead lyke-wake" (25 B), "leak" (73 G), "lyke" (88 E), "burial" (25 A, 73 E).

²⁹ On the lyke-wake see Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, II, 225-30.

³⁰ On merrymaking at wakes see Brand, *ibid*, II, 227 f.

³¹ No. 25 B 11.

³² No. 91 A 19. Cf. G 13 f.: the mother is to come to her "leak-wake" or at least to her "birrien."

³³ No. 76 C 15. Cf. no. 74 A d 16 (Child, II, 203).

As she gaed ower yon high hill head,³⁷
 She saw a dowie light:
 It was the candles at Willie's lyke,³⁸
 And torches burning bright.

For Prince Robert the ladies mourn and weep by torch
 light:³⁷

But when she came to Sillertoun town,
 And into Sillertoun ha,
 The torches were burning, the ladies were mourning,
 And they were weeping a'.

Candles and " torches burning clear " shed their " dowie " light upon a curious ceremony performed at a maiden's wake in the fine ballad of *Young Benjie*. Two brothers would discover their sister's murderer. So on her " low lykewake " they " watch at mirk midnight " to hear " what she will say " :³⁸

Wi doors ajar, and candle-light,
 And torches burning clear,
 The streikit corpse, till still midnight,
 They waked, but naething hear.

About the middle o the night³⁹
 The cocks began to crow,
 And at the dead hour o the night
 The corpse began to thraw.

" O what has done the wrang, sister,
 Or dared the deadly sin?
 Wha was sae stout, and feared nae dout,
 As thraw ye oer the linn? "

" Young Benjie was the first ae man
 I laid my love upon;
 He was sae stout and proud-hearted,
 He threw me oer the linn."

³⁴ On torches and lights at funerals see Brand, *op. cit.*, II, 276 ff.

³⁵ No. 25 E 9 (Child, I, 506).

³⁶ Cf. candle-light and torches at the wake in *Young Benjie* (86 A 15).

³⁷ No. 87 A 12. Cf. B 11:

There were bells a ringing, and sheets down hinging,
 And ladies mourning a'.

³⁸ No. 86 A 15 ff.

³⁹ Ballad ghosts are active at night. Midnight is often specified. See nos. 74 C; 77 E; 78 E; 74 A, B; 77 A; 79; 243 A; 245; 78 (Child, IV, 475); 47 A, B; 69 G 37.

The interesting feature of the "doors ajar" reflects a belief said by Sir Walter Scott to be current among the peasants of Scotland. Leaving the door ajar, according to this superstition, serves as a charm for causing a dead body to speak. "On this account the peasants of Scotland sedulously avoid leaving the door ajar while a corpse lies in the house."⁴⁰

The ballad-like song *The Lyke-Wake Dirge*, a funeral chant of the North Country, may be given a moment's attention here. This old dirge illustrates an early custom that when "any dieth certaine women sing a song to the dead bodie, recyting the journey that the partye deceased must goe."⁴¹ According to the funeral chant, as given by John Aubrey,⁴² the soul must pass over Whinny-moor, thence across the "Brig o' Dread" (Bridge of the Dead?) "no brader than a thread," and so to Purgatory. The ease and safety with which the soul makes the journey depend upon the charitableness of the deceased during his lifetime. These matters may best be brought out by quoting the dirge in part:

If ever thou gave either hosen or shun
every night and awle
Sitt thee downe and putt them on
and Christ recieve thy sawle

⁴⁰ See Scott, *Minstrelsy*, ed. T. F. Henderson, III, 10 f. In his discussion of the ballad Scott gives the following story as related by the peasants of Scotland: "In former times, a man and his wife lived in a solitary cottage, on one of the extensive Border fells. One day, the husband died suddenly; and his wife, who was equally afraid of staying alone by the corpse, or leaving the dead body by itself, repeatedly went to the door, and looked anxiously over the lonely moor for the sight of some person approaching. In her confusion and alarm she accidentally left the door ajar, when the corpse suddenly started up and sat in the bed, frowning and grinning at her frightfully. She sat alone, crying bitterly, unable to avoid the fascination of the dead man's eye, and too much terrified to break the sullen silence, till a Catholic priest, passing over the wild, entered the cottage. He first set the door quite open, then put his little finger in his mouth, and said the paternoster backwards; when the horrid look of the corpse relaxed, it fell back on the bed, and behaved itself as a dead man ought to do."

The incident of the "door ajar" does not occur in either of the other two texts given by Child. See B and the text resembling A (Child, IV, 478 f.).

⁴¹ The custom illustrative of the dirge was by Ritson found described in a MS. of the Cotton Library. See Scott, *op. cit.*, III, 163 f, for the description in full.

⁴² *Remaines of Gentilisme and Judaisme*, ed. J. Britten, pp. 31 f. See also Britten's note, *ibid.*, pp. 220 ff.

But if hosen noi shoon thou never gave nean
every night, &c:
The Whinnes shall prick thee to the bare beane
and Christ recieve thy sawle.

From Whinny-moor that thou mayst pass
every night, &c:
To Brig o' Dread thou comest at last
and Christ &c:

From Brig of Dread that thou mayest pass
no brader than a thread
every night, &c:
To Purgatory fire thou com'st at last
and Christ &c:

If ever thou gave either Milke or drinke
every night, &c:
The fire shall never make thee shrink
and Christ &c:

But if milk nor drink thou never gave nean
every night &c:
The Fire shall burn thee to the bare bene
and Christ recive thy Sawle.

The "Whinny-moor," the "shoon," and the "Brig o' Dread" have important folklore connections, but it is not within the province of this study to enter upon a discussion of these matters.⁴³

The practice of dealing bread and wine or beer and wine to the company assembled at the wake finds depiction in a familiar ballad commonplace. The insistence in these lines, as in *Fair Margaret and Sweet William*,⁴⁴ upon the amount to be dealt seems to indicate that the feasting was governed by the wealth of the deceased:⁴⁵

⁴³ For a discussion of these items with their folklore affiliations see Frank Sidgwick, *Popular Ballads of the Olden Time*, Second Series, pp. 241 f.

⁴⁴ No. 74 A 16.

⁴⁵ Cf. Brand, *op. cit.*, II, 228: "Pipes and tobacco are first distributed, and then, according to the *ability* of the deceased, cakes, and ale, and sometimes whiskey, are *dealt* to the company." Brand quotes our ballad commonplace as illustrative of the foregoing observation.

"Pray tell me then how much you'll deal
Of your white bread and your wine;
So much as is dealt at her funeral today
Tomorrow shall be dealt at mine."

The foregoing incident of dealing at wakes or funerals occurs in a number of our ballads,⁴⁶ but there seems to be a distinction between feasting at the wake and feasting at or after the funeral. The latter occasion for festivity corresponds doubtless to the burial feasts or arvals described by Brand.⁴⁷ Thus in the Gibb version of *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet* we find the "dairgie," a refectio given after a funeral:⁴⁸

"As much breid ye deal at Annie's dairgie⁴⁹
Tomorrow ye's deal at mine."

When Gregory meets the corpse of his sweetheart on the way to the burial he orders that "the spiced bread and the wine" be dealt for her.⁵⁰ But in a Greig version of *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet* it seems that we have an instance of the lyke-wake feast:⁵¹

"O deal ye weel at my lover's lyke⁵²
The white breid and the wine,
An' ere the morn at this time
Ye'll deal as weel at mine."

In the present connection, though not to be confused with the feasting of the funeral guests and mourners, should be

⁴⁶ There is dealing of "wheat-bread (or white-bread) and the wine" in nos. 64, st. 37 (Child, IV, 465); 73 I 41 (Child, IV, 471), E 41, F 34, G 28, H 41; 74 A 16; "cake and your wine" in no. 74 A d 16 (Child, II, 203); "white bread" or simply "bread" and wine in nos. 75 C 9, 75 I 15, 76 C 16; "biscuit and the beer" in no. 75 G 11; "spiced bread and the wine" in no. 76 A 33; "beer but an the wine" in nos. 88 E 8, 222 B 30; "short bread and the wine" in a text of no. 222, st. 22 (Child, V, 262). Cf. texts of no. 74 in Sharp, *Folk-Songs of England*, Book I, 33; Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, pp. 67 f.; *J A F L*, XXVIII, 154; and text of no. 73 in Greig, *Traditional Ballads*, p. 56; text of no. 222 in *ibid.*, p. 271.

⁴⁷ *Op. cit.*, II, 237 ff.

⁴⁸ No. 73 H 41.

⁴⁹ There is a hint here of the extravagance that formerly characterized funeral feasts in Scotland. See Brand, *op. cit.*, II, 241 f.

⁵⁰ No. 76 A 33.

⁵¹ *Traditional Ballads*, p. 56. "Lyke" may mean simply funeral.

⁵² Cf. text of no. 222, *ibid.*, 271.

discussed the distribution of doles at wakes or funerals, and the mention of such doles in the testaments of the dying in order to win the prayers of the poor or of the church. These doles may be in the nature of money or of food.' In Kinloch's copy of *Willie's Lyke-Wake* silver and gold "fly round" for the sake of the deceased — this at his "outmost yett" and at his "inmost yett":⁵⁴

It's whan she cam to the outmost yett,⁵⁵
She made the silver fly round for his sake.

It's whan she cam to the inmost yett,
She made the red gowd fly round for his sake.

In the Jamieson-Brown as well as in a Motherwell text of *The Gay Goshawk*, another ballad of feigned death, gold is dealt at the "thirdin kirk" for the dead:⁵⁶

The thirdin kirk that they came till,
They dealt gold for her sake.

In *The Lass of Roch Royal* bread, wine, and "pennys" are to be dealt at Isabell's funeral:⁵⁷

"Gar deall, gar deall for my love sake"⁵⁸
The spiced bread and the wine;
For ere the morn at this time
So shall you deall for mine.

"Gar deall, gar deall for my love sake
The pennys that are so small;
For ere the morn at this time,
So shall you deall for all."

The dying man craves the prayers of the poor, even at the cost of "gude red gowd,"⁵⁹ as in *The Fire of Frenndraught*:

⁵³ There is no specific mention in British balladry of the old custom of sin-eating, but there is good reason to believe with John Aubrey, *Remaines*, p. 36, that "Doles to Poore people with money at Funeralls have some resemblance of that of ye Sinne-eater."

⁵⁴ No. 25 A 11 f.

⁵⁵ Cf. C 6: "When that she came to her true lover's gate, she dealt the red gold and all for his sake."

⁵⁶ No. 96 A 25, 18; cf. C 14, 31.

⁵⁷ On dealing pence and half-pence at funerals see Brand, *op. cit.*, II, 289.

⁵⁸ No. 76 A 33 f.

⁵⁹ In balladry gold is usually described as "red," "reid," or "yellow." Lavish display of wealth and ornamentation is characteristic of English and Scottish balladry.

He's taen a purse o the gude red gowd,⁶⁰
 And threw it oer the wa:
 "It's ye'll deal that among the poor,
 Bid them pray for our souls a'."

With like regard for the welfare of his soul, Lord Derwentwater asks, just before his execution, that the fifty pounds in his right pocket be divided "to the poor" and that a similar sum in his left pocket be divided "from door to door."⁶¹ Gold is dealt for the prayers of the poor in *Geordie*, prayers which, we may suppose, were efficacious, since the story ends happily:⁶²

When she cam to the West Port,⁶³
 There war poor folks many;
 She dealt crowns an the ducatdowns,
 And bade them pray for Geordie.

Pope's will, it may be remembered, directed that poor men should bear his pall, and the ballad dying are no less solicitous of the interest of the poor. The stricken lover in *Bonny Bee Hom* is specific enough in his testament:⁶⁴

⁶⁰ No. 196 C 15.

⁶¹ *Lord Derwentwater* (208 A 12). Cf. D 11, E 14, F 15, I 17, and text, *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, III, 270 f.. "Here is fifty thousand pounds in one pocket, etc."; and version, G. B. Gardiner and Gustav von Holst, *Folk-Songs of England*, Book III, 5: "There is forty pounds, etc."

Begging for the dead is found in no. 66 A 31: "For a bit I'll beg for Chiel Wyet, for Lord Ingram I'll beg three." No. 107 A 66 makes mention of the "dole-day": "By chance itt was of the dole-day;" st. 68: "And now the dole *that* itt is delte, and all the beggars be gon away"

⁶² No. 209 B 8.

⁶³ Cf. texts C-J, and text, Gavin Greig, *Folk-Song of the North-East*, art. LXXV: "She parted the yellow gold them among etc." See also Greig, *Traditional Ballads*, p. 132, and text, *ibid.*, p. 266: She gave "shillins," "croons," and "red guineas" to the poor and "bade them pray for Geordie."

⁶⁴ No. 92 B 15 f.

"Ye'll take my jewels that's in Bahome,⁶⁵
 And deal them liberallie,
 To young that cannot, and old that mannot,
 The blind that does not see.

"Give maist to women in child-bed laid,
 Can neither fecht nor flee;"

Graveclothes, Coffin, and Bier. Ballad funerals, virtually without exception, are aristocratic, and the burial clothes and the bier, if we may trust conventional passages, reveal decided splendor. The preparation of the dead for burial, the "streaking" of the body,⁶⁶ the making of graveclothes, coffin, and bier, are under way during the "lyke" or wake in *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet*:⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Cf. A 10. Lord Livingston in the ballad of that name (262, st. 29) makes the following testament:

"Ye'll take the lands o Livingston
 And deal them liberallie,
 To the auld that may not, the young that cannot,
 And blind that does na see,
 And help young maidens' mairriages,
 That has nae gear to gie."

⁶⁶ On laying out or streaking the body see Brand, *op. cit.*, II, 231 ff. The few scattered references in the ballads to getting the body ready for burial may be disposed of here. Washing the hands and feet of the dead is implied in *Proud Lady Margaret* (47 A 18, B 23). Lady Margaret (A 18), says her dead brother, may not go to "clay" with him:

"For ye've unwashen hands and ye've unwashen feet,
 To gae to clay wi me."

Braiding his hair follows hard upon Clerk Colvill's visit to the "false mermaid" (42 B 10): "O mother, mother, braid my hair." Queen Jane's body (no. 170 I 7, Child, V, 246) is anointed with "the ointment so sweet." Lines from *The Duke of Bedford* (Child, V, 298), a plagiarism from the foregoing ballad and which Child brands as "trivial," portray the disembowelling and garnishing of the corpse. Cf. Child's version with that in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, V, 79 f.: "They opened his bowels and stretched out his feet, and garnished him over with lilies so sweet." Laying the body out is not described in the ballads, but the Earl of Aboyne's lady "was newly strickit" (235 D 25); H 7: was "lying streakit;" and Marjorie's is a "streakit corpse" (86 A 15). Before rolling him in a cake of lead the Jew's Daughter (155 B 6 f.) dresses Sir Hugh "like a swine." Cf. C 8 ff., D 8, E 9. The foregoing is probably an instance of disembowelling.

⁶⁷ No. 73 E 36 ff.

The firsten bower that he came till,
 There was right dowie wark;
 Her mither and her three sisters
 Were makin to Annie a sark

The nexten bower that he came till,
 There was right dowie cheir;
 Her father and her seven brethren
 Were makin to Annie a bier.

The lasten bower that he came till,

.

 And Fair Annie streekit there.

According to another text, "Annie's sisters an sisters' bairns were sewing at Annie's weed."⁶⁸ Wrapping the corpse in the winding-sheet is described in still another version:⁶⁹

Her father was at her heed, hei heed,
 Her mother at her feet,
 Her sister she was at her side,
 Puttin on her winding sheet.

It is a noteworthy point that in the foregoing ballad, as well as in *The Gay Goshawk*, the relatives of the deceased themselves fashion both shroud and bier. The latter song reads:⁷⁰

Her father an her brothers dear
 Gard make to her a bier;
 The tae half was o guide red gold,
 The tither o silver clear.

Her mither an her sisters fair
 Gard work for her a sark;
 The tae half was o cambrick fine,⁷¹
 The tither o needle wark.

⁶⁸ H 38.

⁶⁹ F 32.

⁷⁰ No. 96 A 22 f. Cf. G 34 f., and *Willie's Lyke-Wake* (25 E'9 ff, Child, I, 506). Mother prepares winding sheet for her dead son in no. 155 A 15, B 13, C 16, E 21, F 13, etc.

⁷¹ Cf. C 26: sark of "satin fine, and the steeking silken wark;" H 20 (Child, IV, 485): sheet of "silk sae fine" and "cambric white." Cf. *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet* (73 I 38, Child, IV, 471).

In a Motherwell copy of this piece one side of the "smock," as of the bier, is of "the bonny beaten gold."⁷² In still another text the winding-sheet is so described.⁷³ Scott's text pictures the seven sisters sewing "to her a kell," a cap of network, which they ornament with silver bells:⁷⁴

Then up and gat her seven sisters,
And sewed to her a kell,
And every steek that they pat in⁷⁵
Sewd to a siller bell.

In English balladry the dress of the living is usually of "silk sae fine," "holland fine," "cambric fine," or of the "velvet pall,"⁷⁶ but the vain lady in *Proud Lady Margaret*, arrayed though she is in fine clothes and jewels, wears "ower coarse robes" to "go to clay" with her dead brother.⁷⁷

Descriptions of the bier and the coffin reveal the customary fondness of the ballads for gold and silver or other ornamentation.⁷⁸ The "boards" of the bier in a Motherwell text of *The Gay Goshawk* "was cedar wood, and the plates ow it gold so clear."⁷⁹ According to Scott's text, they "hewd it frae the solid aik, laid it oer wi silver clear."⁸⁰ In another ballad Annie's father and her seven brothers make "to her a bier, wi ae stamp o the melten goud, another o siller

⁷² B 16: "The one side of the bonny beaten gold, and the other of the needle-work."

⁷³ D 26.

⁷⁴ E 30.

⁷⁵ Cf. the sails in *Sir Patrick Spens* (58 L 1): "At every tack of needle-work there hung a silver bell." In no. 75 D 7 the burial sheets are of linen. Cf. American text of no. 84, Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, p. 95: "unfold those lily-white sheets."

⁷⁶ For the use of silk see, for example, nos. 1 C 11, D 2; 4 C 6; 5 B 61; 8 A 7; 10 G 4; 11 A 22, C 17, G 16, etc.; 33 B 10; 37 A 2, B 2; 39 G 42; 42 A 5; 46 A 15. Holland: nos. 2 D 5; 4 D 14; 7 B 8; 46 A 3; 73 A 15; 76 A 16, G 17. Cambric: nos. 2 G 1; 7 C 6, E 5; 25 E 11; 66 C 6; 76 D 15; 96 A 23; 98 C 42. Pall: nos. 5 A 7, B 6; 11 A 22; 37 A 2, C 2; 45 A 3; 54 B 11, C 10. Silk is by far the most common fabric in the English ballads. The fondness of the ballads for rich fabrics should be thought of in connection with their fondness for gold and silver and jewels, and for brilliant colors, as reflecting a primitive love for display. See my study "Sewing the Silken Seam" in the *English and Scottish Ballads*, *Poet Lore*, XXX, no. 4.

⁷⁷ No. 47 B 23.

⁷⁸ On the display of wealth in balladry see Andrew Lang, "Ballads," *Encyclopædia Britannica* (11th ed.), III, 266.

⁷⁹ No. 96 C 25.

⁸⁰ E 29.

clear.”⁸¹ A Motherwell text calls the bier a “carriage-bier,” “with the one side of the beaten gold, and the other o the silver clear.”⁸² In *Bonnie Annie* the ship’s captain makes his love “a coffin of the gowd sae yellow.”⁸³ In *Sir Hugh, The Battle of Otterburn*, and *The Hunting of the Cheviot* the coffin is of hazel and birch.⁸⁴ Young Jean in the song of *Glenlogie* cares no more for her seals and her signets but craves “linen and trappin, a chest and a grave.”⁸⁵

In *Flodden Field*, a battle piece, a corpse is wrapped in leather;⁸⁶ in *The Sweet Trinity*, a sea ballad, in “an old cow’s-hide.”⁸⁷ The dead body is inclosed in lead in *Sir Hugh*:⁸⁸

She’s rowd him in a cake o lead,⁸⁹
 Bade him lie still and sleep;
 She’s thrown him in Our Lady’s draw-well,
 Was fifty fathoms deep.

⁸¹ No. 73 I 37 (Child, IV, 471). Cf. G 27: “half of it guid red goud, the other silver clear;” as in another text (Child, V, 224, st. 25).

⁸² No. 96 D 10. The supposed corpse, be it remembered, is carried by the maiden’s seven brothers from England into Scotland. See also the specially contrived “bier” in G 39:

The bier was made wi red gowd laid,
 Sae curious round about;
 A private entrance there contriv’d,
 That her breath might win out.

⁸³ No. 24 A 16, B 16. See also text of Baring-Gould (Child, IV, 453, st. 14). Cf. texts in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, II, 33 ff.: “I’ll edge it all with yellow,” “of the gold that shines so yellow,” “and the gold shall shine yellow,” the coffin “shall shine yellow;” *ibid.*, III, 292 f.: “she shall have a coffin, and the nails shall shine yellow.” Cf. text, Gavin Greig, *Traditional Ballads*, p. 24: “a kist o the gowd sae yellow.” See text, Wyman and Brockway, *Lonesome Tunes*, p. 94: coffin is “red-lined,” a probable corruption of “red gold.”

⁸⁴ No. 155 N 15: “hazel and green birch;” no. 161 A 67: “of byrche and haysell graye;” no. 162 A 57: “birch and hasell so gray.” In *Sweet William’s Ghost* (77 G 1) a “wand o bonny birk” is laid on the breast of the dead. On this incident see Scott, *Minstrelsy*, III, 231.

⁸⁵ No. 238 E 12.

⁸⁶ No. 168, st. 12. On the historicity of this incident see Child, III, 351 f.

⁸⁷ No. 286 C 7: “they sewed him up in an old cow’s-hide.” Cf. texts, *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, I, 104; II, 244. American texts: *J A F L*, XXIII, 429 f.: “in an old rawhide;” Pound, *American Ballads and Songs*, p. 26: in “his hammock.”

⁸⁸ No. 155 A 9.

⁸⁹ Cf. B, C, D, E, G; E 10 reads: “case of lead.” Cf. text, *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, V, 252 ff., first version: “bring hither a white winding sheet, all on a Marland cross” Cf. *Lord Soule’s* (Scott, *Minstrelsy*, IV, 240, st. lxxv): “They roll’d him up in a sheet of lead, a sheet of lead for a funeral pall.”

Grief and Mourning. Before taking up mourning customs more or less as we know them today, we ought to raise the question as to whether the ballads hold anything of primitive mourning ritual. One is inclined to raise this question when confronted with the various and picturesque ways that ballad characters have of expressing grief. What means, for example, the riving or tearing of the hair, what the pulling of ribbons from the hair and letting them "down fa," what the wringing of the hands, the "cracking" of the fingers? May these incidents be dismissed as extravagances that are likely to characterize popular poetry when striving for its own peculiar effects, or do they reflect a way of life that, without the aid of artistic distortion, would appear absurd to the modern reader, as unnatural, say, as the unheroic lamentations of certain of Homer's heroes?

What, again, signify those austerities that are vowed by ballad actors on the occasion of the death of a loved one? On the surface they appear to be nothing more than those penances that were, as Prior suggests, "agreeable to the habits of the age."⁹⁰ But may they not reflect, however indirectly, those prohibitions that in early society centered about death? Going without certain articles of clothing, leaving off ornaments, fasting, wearing black, going without fire and candle-light, all these things the bereaved in balladry will do by way of penance or for the sake of the departed. Thus in a Motherwell text of *Clerk Saunders*:⁹¹

"It's I will do for my love's sake
What many ladies would think lang;
Seven years shall come and go⁹²
Before a glove go on my hand.

"And I will do for my love's sake
What many ladies would not do;
Seven years shall come and go
Before I wear stocking or shoe.

"Ther'll neer a shirt go on my back,
There'll neer a kame go in my hair,
There'll never coal nor candle-light
Shine in my bower nae mair."

⁹⁰ *Ancient Danish Ballads*, II, 111.

⁹¹ No. 69 D 13 ff.

The foregoing stanzas take on additional interest when read in connection with E. S. Hartland's description of primitive mourning practices: "Everywhere mourning garb is an essential part of the observances. Primarily it seems intended to distinguish those who are under the tabu. For this reason it is usually the reverse of the garb of ordinary life. Peoples who wear their hair long cut or shave it; those who habitually cut or shave it allow it to grow. Those who paint omit the painting. Those who wear clothing go naked, or wear scanty, coarse, or old worn-out clothes. Ornaments are laid aside or covered up. Those who habitually dress in gay clothing put on colourless — black or white — garments."⁹²

In Herd's version of *Clerk Saunders* we find the additional penance of wearing "nought but dowy black."⁹³ In still another text four stanzas are given up to an enumeration of austerities vowed by the grief-stricken heroine: "Seven years shall come and go before I wash this face of mine. . . . before I comb my yellow hair. . . . before I cast off stocking and shoe. . . . before I cast off my robes of black."⁹⁴ The robes of black are pretty clearly indicative that we are dealing here with mourning observances.⁹⁵ In Buchan's copy of *Bonny Bee Hom* the penance of fasting is undertaken because of a maiden's grief for her lover who had been "forc'd" to "the sea;" but this is not grieving for the dead: "The ale shall neer be brewin o malt, . . . that ever mair shall cross my hause, till my love comes to hand."⁹⁶ A mother's grief for her two dead sons finds somewhat similar expression in *The Clerk's Twa Sons o Owsenford*:⁹⁷

⁹² *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, IV, 439 See also *ibid.*, II, 231 f., under "Austerities."

⁹³ No. 69 A 20 ff.

⁹⁴ E 17. On penances in ballads and romances see Child, II, 156 f.; V, 223.

⁹⁵ On black at funerals see *infra*, pp. 110 ff.

⁹⁶ No. 92 B 3. Cf. A 3 f.

⁹⁷ No. 72 A 17. Refusing to eat or drink until a certain thing is accomplished is a ballad commonplace; see nos 41 A, 46 B, 47 A, 123 A, 200 A-F, 209 A C G; 222 A; 30, st. 7.

" O sorrow, sorrow come mak my bed,
 An dool come lay me doon!
 For I'll neither eat nor drink,"⁹⁸
 Nor set a fit on ground."

Or better, in another text: ⁹⁹

" And I will spend my days in grief,
 Will never laugh nor sing;
 There's never a man in Oxenfoord
 Shall hear my bridle ring."

Divorced under false accusation of infidelity, Jamie Douglas's wife makes the usual resolutions of self-denial,¹⁰⁰ a commonplace that occurs also in *The Coble o Cargill* and in *Lord Livingston*.¹⁰¹

Upon the death of her lover, a maiden in a Motherwell copy of *Clerk Saunders* dreams of cutting her yellow hair and dripping it in "the wells o blood."¹⁰² May this be a reflection of the ancient custom of cutting the hair as a part of the ritual of grief? Fair Annie, in another song, hears of her lover's death. She cuts off her yellow locks and hurries to his "lyke":¹⁰³

She has cut aff her yellow locks,
 A little aboon her ee,
 And she is on to Willie's lyke,
 As fast as gang could she.

But the foregoing passage may be taken with too great assurance as illustrating a funerary practice, for it is a ballad commonplace, and maidens on other occasions than death are accustomed to "snood," "plait," or cut their yellow locks.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁸ Cf. C 19.

⁹⁹ D 14.

¹⁰⁰ No. 204 E 7.

¹⁰¹ Nos. 242, st. 14; 262, sts. 31 f. Cf. 81 L 48 and *The Lowlands of Holland, Journal of the Irish Folk-Song*, II, 31.

¹⁰² No. 69 D 10.

¹⁰³ No. 25 E 8 (Child, I, 506).

¹⁰⁴ See nos. 39 A 17, B 16, L 2 (Child, IV, 457); 41 B 2; 63 A 10; 77 A 11; 103 A 13, B 18, C 4 f.; and Child, V, 202 a.

Mourning customs aside for the moment, ballad characters do express their emotions, and among these grief, in unusual and picturesque fashion. "Knacking" or wringing the "white fingers," cracking the finger-joints, tearing or riving the hair, are common indications of sorrow; so, too, the breaking of rings and the flying off of buttons, nose-bleed, and looking over the left shoulder. Exclamations of grief, and words and phrases descriptive of the darker moods of life, are found on every hand.¹⁰⁵ Ballad actors are as unrestrained in their weeping as in their laughter.¹⁰⁶

Riving or tearing the hair over the death of a loved one occurs in Tytler's Brown version of *The Cruel Brother*:¹⁰⁷

This ladie fair in her grave was laid,
And many a mass was oer her said.

But it would have made your heart right sair,
To see the bridegroom rive his hair.

The good Scots lords, "wi Sir Patrick at their feet," lie "fifty fathoms deep, and their bereaved ladies crack their fingers white and maidens tear their hair":¹⁰⁸

The ladies crackt their fingers white,¹⁰⁹
The maidens tore their hair,
A' for the sake o their true loves,
For them they neer saw mair.

¹⁰⁵ For example: "hech and how," "Och how," "ochanie," "Heigh a ween, and Oh a ween, a ween, a woe-ses me!" (173 H 11, 13; 204 L 14; *The Hagg Worm*, Child, II, 504, st. 27). Cf. "O hon, alas!" (5 B 37); "alelladay, oh and alelladay" (20 A 1, refrain line); "waly, waly" (96 E 1; 204 B 1, C 1; 9 G 1, 2; 231 D b 1, Child, IV, 290). Cf. other terms descriptive of grief: "tray and tene," "dool," "wanhappy," "wo, woo, woe," "drumlie," "dowie," "drouсли." Cf. "lamrachie," "lamacheelie" (163), Greig, *Traditional Ballads*, pp. 103, st. 20; 262.

¹⁰⁶ "A loud lauch lauched he." See Child, V, 474, for the occurrence of this commonplace.

¹⁰⁷ No. 11 A 28.

¹⁰⁸ No. 58 G 16.

¹⁰⁹ The commonplace of wringing the hands and tearing the hair occurs in nos. 58 H 23; 91 D 7, G 29 (Child, V, 228); 92 B; 182 E; 187 A; 191 A, C; 210 A, B, C; 243 B; 257 A; 263; 238 I; 239 A, B; 252 B; 259. Cf. *Go Fetch My Little Footboy*, *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, III, 74: "A wringing of his hands and a-tearing his hair;" no. 182 in Greig, *Folk-Song of the North-East*, art. LXXV: "torn oot her bonnie yellow hair, and she has torn't locks three and three." "Knacking" the white fingers is a sign of mirth in no. 91 G 5 (Child, V, 227): "Mukell mirth was ther; the knights knaked ther whit fingers, the ladys curled ther hear." Cf. no. 257 A 7.

Out of grief for her drowned lover a maiden tears the ribbons from her hair: ¹¹⁰

The ribbons that were on her hair —
 An they were thick and monny —
 She rive them a', let them down fa,
 An is on [to] the water o Gamerie.

At sight of Fair Annie's corpse Lord Gregory, in *The Lass of Roch Royal*, tears "his gowden locks" and makes a "wafu moan." ¹¹¹

Already discussed under death omens, the breaking of rings, the flying off of buttons, and nose-bleed seem in certain instances to be merely a sign of violent emotion. Thus in Herd's text of *Fair Mary of Wallington*, Levieston, fearing that his wife will die, knocks his white fingers, and his "goude rings" fly "in foure": ¹¹²

The knight he knocked his white fingers,¹¹³
 The goude rings flew in foure.

Looking over the left shoulder appears to be indicative of grief in *Young Beichan*: ¹¹⁴

She's lookit oer her left shoulder ¹¹⁵
 To hide the tears stood in her ee.

We would not imply in our survey of the foregoing incidents that we are dealing directly in all cases with ritualistic mourning, but these passages seem to reflect psychological traits

¹¹⁰ *The Water o Gamrie* (215 D 12). Cf. E 15, F 8, G 7, and *The Braes o Yarrow* (214 D 11, I 12). See also texts of the foregoing ballads, Greig, *Traditional Ballads*, pp. 142, 146. According to Child (*Ballads*, IV, 462 n.), this incident belongs to no. 215.

¹¹¹ No. 76, st. 45 (Child, IV, 473).

¹¹² No. 91 B 5, 6, 7.

¹¹³ Cf. C 9: "Her good lord wrang his milk-white hands, till the gowd rings flew in three;" F 11: "Darlington stood on the stair, and gart the gowd rings flee."

Buttons burst as a sign of violent emotion in no. 78 C 15: "And the buttons on Lord Thomas' coat, brusted and brak in twa." Cf. *Jamie Douglas* (204 I 15). On the occurrence of this incident in the ballads and elsewhere see Child, IV, 302. This commonplace occurs also in *Annan Water*, st. 11 (Child, IV, 185). Cf. also no. 235 J 10: "Till stays and gown and all did burst." According to a Motherwell text of *Prince Robert* (87 C 16), "death was so strong in Lord Robert's breast that the gold ring burst in three."

¹¹⁴ No. 53 A 21. Cf. no. 191 A 19. On looking over the left shoulder as an act of evil portent see *supra*, pp. 75 ff.

¹¹⁵ Cf. looking over the right shoulder, no. 191 A 21.

that are more or less primitive and far removed from the mental attitudes of more civilized people. They give evidence, too, of a matrix of emotionalism in which may be engendered a world of superstitious custom and belief. This same heightened emotional state is found again in the peculiar incident of jumping over tables or breaking table furniture to flinders and hurling it into the fire. As it occurs in the ballads this feat is expressive of emotions ranging from joy to grief. It is an incident that appears not only in balladry but in tales, and seems to have been copied directly from life itself.¹¹⁶ It appears to be indicative of fear or of sorrow in *Fair Mary of Wallington*. The mother, sitting "in her chair of stone," is called to her "daughter's sickening or her merry lake-wake":¹¹⁷

She kickt the table with her foot,¹¹⁸
 she kickt it with her knee,
 The silver plate into the fire,
 so far she made it flee.

Emotional gymnastics of this sort, however, as we have already hinted, may be displayed not only on tragic occasions but in any moment of great excitement, as when Young Beichan learns that his old love has returned. According to different versions, Beichan kicks over tables, breaks his sword "in splinters three," or clears a stair of "fifteen" or

¹¹⁶ For the occurrence of this incident see Child, V, 498, at "Table jumped." See especially *ibid.*, II, 127, 128 and n.

¹¹⁷ No. 91 A 22.

¹¹⁸ Cf. B 20: "Till siller cups an siller cans unto the floor did gae." The Earl of Aboyne (235 C 14) upon hearing the news of his wife's death, "gae the table wi his foot, an koudit it wi his knee, gared silver cup and easer dish in flinders flee." D 27: "He took the table wi his foot, made a' the room to tremble." Cf. J 12. "But the greatest achievements in this way," notes Child (III, 509 a), "are in Slavick ballads. A bride, on learning of her bride-groom's death, jumps over four tables and lights on the fifth, rushes to her chamber and stabs herself" Kinmont Willie (186, st. 9) "takes the table with his hand and gars the red wine spring on hie." "The table," says Child (II, 127), "being of boards laid on trestles, would be easy to ding over, and those in whose way it might be seem to have preferred to clear it in that fashion, at least out of Britain." In *The Gay Goshawk* (96 H 26, Child, IV, 485) the lover has

. . . taen the coffin wi his fit,
 Gard it in flinders fle.

But this is a ballad of feigned death.

"thirty" steps in three bounds.¹¹⁹ Beichan's feat is well preserved in American texts of our ballad and in English and Scottish versions recovered since Child.¹²⁰

Before passing to our survey of conventional mourning practices we must dwell for a moment upon another familiar ballad incident. From such exaggerated expressions of grief as those listed in the foregoing pages it is no far cry to madness or death itself, and ballad actors on tragic occasions are prone to go "brain" or "wood," to swoon, or to die of grief or remorse. Because she is "big wi bairn" to an English lord,¹²¹ Lady Maisry suffers death by burning at the hands of her relatives. Her true-love runs "brain" on the fields:¹²²

Great meen was made for Lady Maisry,¹²³
On that hill whare she was slain;
But mair was for her ain true-love,
On the fields for he ran brain.

¹¹⁹ *Young Beichan* (53 B 18, D 23, F 28, H 42, J 5, N 42, and texts, Child, IV, 462, V, 219). This commonplace occurs also in nos. 63 G 18 f.; 66 C 17; 83 E 17, F 23; 96 H 26 (Child, IV, 485); 173 S 5 (Child, IV, 508); 186, st. 9; 235 C 14, D 27, J 12, and text, st. 14 (Child, V, 271); 238 I 4; 91 A 22, B 20. In no. 53 A 19, E 34 Beichan makes fifteen steps of the stair in three; D 24: "thirty steps in three." Cf. N 43. In L 18 he flew in a "passion" and "broke his sword in splinters three;" K 4: "rent himself like a sword in three." Cf. the feat of the auld queen (5 A 38) who is stark and strang: "She gard the door flee aff the ban;" B 31: "She aff the hinges dang the dure."

¹²⁰ American texts: the most common reading is "He stamped his foot upon the floor and burst the table in pieces three," as in *J A F L*, XVIII, 209 f.; XX, 251; XXII, 64; Wyman and Brockway, *Lonesome Tunes*, p. 61; Campbell and Sharp, *Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, p. 41; Mackenzie, *Quest of the Ballad*, p. 117; Pound, *American Ballads and Songs*, p. 36; in this last: "rose upon his feet, and split his table in pieces three." Cf. texts, Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South*, pp. 36 ff.

See English and Scottish texts, Greig, *Folk-Song of the North-East*, art. LXXVIII; *Traditional Ballads*, p. 42; Sharp and Marson, *Folk Songs from Somerset*, Third Series, p. 31.

¹²¹ Her crime is that she is with bairn to an English rather than a Scottish lord. That her own relatives exercise justice upon her is a striking feature of the story.

¹²² No. 65 H 39.

¹²³ On this incident Child has the following note (*Ballads*, II, 113 n.): "According to Buchan, H 39, Maisry's true-love ran brain; so again in Buchan's version of *Fair Janet*; see F 35. This is Maisry's end in several versions of 'Auld Ingram,' and in all, I suppose, a modern substitute for the immediate death of older ballads." Throughout his great collection Child, as in the foregoing passage, levels his criticism at Buchan, but he often does so unjustly. Buchan's version of *Fair Janet* (64 F 7 ff.), for instance, gives us our sole example in British balladry of the couvade.

Such is the fate of the bereaved in *Lord Ingram and Chiel Wyet*,¹²⁴ *Willie and Lady Maisry*,¹²⁵ and *Glasgerion*.¹²⁶ In Percy's copy of *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet* Lord Thomas waxed "wood-wroth" when he saw Annet's "dear heart's blude."¹²⁷ "I thinke that I was woode" is Old Robin's excuse for having mutilated his unfaithful wife,¹²⁸ and Lord Barnard offers the same excuse for a like deed.¹²⁹ In *Northumberland Betrayed by Douglas* a lady looks over her left shoulder and falls in a "dead swoone."¹³⁰ Upon news of his wife's death, the ship-carpenter in *The Daemon Lover* "grievously fell in a swoon;"¹³¹ and out of grief for her dead lover a maiden in *Willie and Lady Maisry* suffers literal heartbreak: "Her heart it brak in twa."¹³² And greater heartbreak for a like cause is that of another maiden in *The Twa Brothers*: "And her heart burst into three."¹³³ The lover in *Fair Margaret and Sweet William* "dy'd for sorrow."¹³⁴ The lachrymose napkin in *Fair Annie* should not be overlooked, although the occasion for sorrow is not death.¹³⁵

After our survey of phrases, lines, and passages descriptive of grief and lamentation we may now turn our attention to such matters as mourning garb, the number of mourners, and the period of mourning. According to the ballads, black is the appropriate funeral color.¹³⁶ Golden, stone, and oak chairs are found in balladry, but in *Sir Aldingar*, Scott's text, the queen, about to be burnt, is set in a black velvet chair, "a token for the dead":¹³⁷

¹²⁴ No. 66 A 28 f., B 20, D 9.

¹²⁵ No. 70 B 25.

¹²⁶ No. 67 B 29. See also nos. 63 F 35, 101 A 10, 157 G 33.

¹²⁷ No. 73 A 26. See W. M. Hart, *English Popular Ballads*, p. 325, on the expression "wod" as it occurs in *St. Stephen and Herod* (22, st. 7).

¹²⁸ No. 80, st. 30.

¹²⁹ No. 81 A 27.

¹³⁰ No. 176, st. 37.

¹³¹ No. 243 B 12. Cf. nos. 92 B 17; 48, st. 29; 241 A 13.

¹³² No. 70 A 15.

¹³³ No. 49 E 18. Cf. nos. 41 A 30; 48, st. 29; 110 C 8, 21, 26; 256, st. 10; 87 C 17; 204 D 15.

¹³⁴ No. 74 A 17, B 17.

¹³⁵ No. 62 A 16.

¹³⁶ On black at funerals see Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, II, 281 ff.

¹³⁷ No. 59 B 26.

In a black velvet chair she's set,
A token for the dead.

For seven years all "were clad in black, to mourn for Gight's own lady"—this in Buchan's text of *Geordie*.¹³⁸ Annie's spirit cuts Willie to the heart by reminding him of the "black, black kist" to which his infidelity has consigned his forsaken true-love.¹³⁹ Among the austerities vowed by May Margaret for her dead lover is that of wearing black for seven years:¹⁴⁰

"When seven years is come an gone,
I'll wear nought but dowy black."

A father in *Earl Crawford* puts on the black himself and tells the others to do likewise:¹⁴¹

"Ye may cast aff your robes o scarlet —
I wyte they set you wondrous weel —
And now put on the black sae dowie,
And come and bury your Lady Lill.

Though it occurs in Danish balladry, white for mourning is not found in English folksong.¹⁴²

Conventional mourning-mantle and hat make their appearance in Buchan's text of *Bonny Baby Livingston*:¹⁴³

"Get me my hat, dyed o the black,¹⁴⁴
My mourning-mantle tee,"

Letters announcing the death of the Lady of Aboyne are "all sealed in black," and "fifteen o the finest lords" "from their

¹³⁸ No. 209 J 41. This incident occurs in what Child (IV, 126) calls a "spurious supplement" to the ballad.

¹³⁹ No. 73 E 34.

¹⁴⁰ No. 69 A 22. Cf. E 20.

¹⁴¹ No. 229 A 21.

¹⁴² See *Axel and Walborg*, st. 171, Prior, *Ancient Danish Ballads*, II, 273: "O take ye robes of linen white, and leave your silk so red."

There is record of white funerals in Shropshire, Burne, *Shropshire Folk-Lore*, p. 300. Cf. white "wands" in no. 170 D 5.

¹⁴³ No. 222 B 24.

¹⁴⁴ "A black suit of mourning" is one of the dying bequests in two American variants of *Lord Randal* (12), *J A F L*, XVI, 285 ff.; XVIII, 197. In three American texts of *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet* (73), *J A F L*, XXVIII, 152; Campbell and Sharp, pp. 56, 58, the hero directs that his coffin be painted black. In another variant of *Lord Randal* (12), *J A F L*, XVI, 258, the dying lover wills a "black yoke of oxen to his brother."

hose to their hat, . . . were all clad in black."¹⁴⁵ Black lends its dark aspect to the pomp of royal funeral in *The Death of Queen Jane*: black stockings, bands, weapons, mufflers, shoes, chevrons.¹⁴⁶ In Jamieson's copy of this little threnody, current in both England and Scotland, there is even greater profusion of black:¹⁴⁷

O black was King Henry, and black were his men,¹⁴⁸
And black was the steed that King Henry rode on.

And black were the ladies, and black were their fans,
And black were the gloves that they wore on their hands,
And black were the ribbands they wore on their heads,
And black were the pages, and black were the maids.

An unpopular color in balladry, black is usually accompanied by the epithets "dowie" and "grisly."¹⁴⁹ Fair Annie rejects the "grisly black" for a wedding garment,¹⁵⁰ and an old woman, probably a hired witch, in *Robin Hood's Death* kneels on a plank over "blacke water" as she bans the noble outlaw.¹⁵¹

Who the mourners are, their number, how long they mourn, and where, may be given brief consideration. Women are the principal mourners in balladry, partly, perhaps, because they are the only ones left to mourn or because the mourning

¹⁴⁵ No. 235 A 18 f. Cf. B 17 f.: "letter sealed wth black" and "frae the horse to the hat, a' must be black." E 7: "A' clead in black frae the saidle to the hat." Cf. text, Greig, *Traditional Ballads*, p. 181: "letters sealed in black."

¹⁴⁶ No. 170 B 8.

¹⁴⁷ C 4 f.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. D 5: "Black was the mourning, and white were the wands;" "Six dukes followed after, in black mourning gownds." Cf. text, *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, V, 257: "how deep was the mourning;" as in text, Sharp, *One Hundred English Folksongs*, p. 68. See also text, Greig, *op. cit.*, 107: "Black was the kitchen, and black was the hall, and black was the aprons that hung on them all" "And black were the women attending Queen Jane."

¹⁴⁹ Black occurs in the Child pieces some three hundred times, with reference, as a rule, to steeds. The "milk-white" steed is generally preferred to all others. Black is found something like a dozen times in descriptions of human hair and eyes. The hats of the two condemned sons in no. 72 C 39 are black.

¹⁵⁰ No. 73 B 20: "I'll na put on the grisly black, nor yet the dowie green." Fair Annie, to be sure, is not the bride in the story, but her apparel is designed to outshine that of her rival.

¹⁵¹ No. 120 A 7 f.

rôle is one to which they are well adapted. But women are seen mourning, too, for one of their own kind. In *Lord Lovel*, a song with German and Norse affiliations, there is mourning by women for Lady Ouncebell: ¹⁵²

He heard the sound o a fine chapel-bell,
And the ladies were mourning all.

In Percy's version of this piece "The ladys make all their moan." ¹⁵³ "Four and twenty ladies" let the "tears down fall" at the death-bed of Mary in *Fair Mary of Wallington*. ¹⁵⁴ In the Burton copy of this song, however, there are knights as well as ladies, ¹⁵⁵ but this is probably a corruption, "knights" being substituted for "knight," the lady's husband, in other copies. In both the Scott and the Motherwell versions of *Prince Robert* ladies are the mourners. ¹⁵⁶ In Laing's text of *Lord Lovel* "the folk gae mournin round." ¹⁵⁷ There is a hint of the professional mourner in *Willie's Lyke-Wake*: "Amang the weepers and merry mourners a'." ¹⁵⁸

Some idea as to the number of mourners may be had from the foregoing citations. The period of mourning may cover seven years, if we regard the austerities vowed upon the death of a loved one as evidence of mourning customs. ¹⁵⁹ A twelvemonth is its duration in *The Unquiet Grave*: ¹⁶⁰

¹⁵² No. 75 B 7.

¹⁵³ A 6. Cf. E 6: "the ladies were making a moan." Cf. text, Greig, *op. cit.*, p. 57: "people all mourning round;" and texts, Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South*, pp. 79 ff.: "people" or "ladies" mourning. See text of *Lady Mairry* (65), Hammond and Sharp, *Folk-Songs of England*, Book I, 39: "And the ladies mourning round;" or a ballad that seems to be related to both the foregoing songs, *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, III, 74 f.: "A-wringing of his hands and a-tearing of his hair, crying, 'Love, will you mourn for us all?'"

¹⁵⁴ No. 91 A 28.

¹⁵⁵ D 7.

¹⁵⁶ No. 87 A 12: "The torches were burning, the ladies were mourning, and they were weeping a';" cf. B 11: "And ladies mourning a'."

¹⁵⁷ No. 75 C 7. Cf. H 5: "the people all mourning round." So, too, in American texts: *J A F L*, XVIII, 291 ff.; Campbell and Sharp, p. 71; McGill, *Folk Songs of the Kentucky Mountains*, p. 9; Sharp, *One Hundred English Folksongs*, p. 60; Pound, *American Ballads and Songs*, pp. 4 ff. English texts: *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, VI, 31; Greig, *Folk-Song of the North-East*, II, art. CLIX.

¹⁵⁸ No. 25 B 11.

¹⁵⁹ See *supra*, pp. 103 ff.

¹⁶⁰ No. 78, all texts.

"I'll do as much for my true-love¹³¹
 As any young man may;
 I'll sit and mourn all at her grave
 For a twelvemonth and a day"

In *The Brown Girl* a maiden says she will dance and sing on her lover's grave for a "whole twelvemonth and a day":¹³²

"I'll dance and sing on my love's grave¹³³
 A whole twelvemonth and a day."

In both *The Unquiet Grave* and *The Twa Brothers* the living mourn excessively, and the slumber of the dead is disturbed thereby:¹³⁴

The twelvemonth and a day being up,¹³⁵
 The dead began to speak:
 "Oh who sits weeping on my grave,
 And will not let me sleep."

The Funeral Procession. Bearing the corpse or following it to the grave is portrayed in several ballads,¹³⁶ and in one song, *The Death of Queen Jane*, there is an imposing funeral train. In the Mason version of *Lady Alice*, a little ballad "still of the regular stock of the stalls,"¹³⁷ the corpse is borne on the shoulders of "six tall men":¹³⁸

¹³¹ Cf. American and English variants since Child. The period of mourning is a twelvemonth: Sharp, *One Hundred English Folksongs*, p. 56; *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, I, 119, 192; II, 6 ff., Sharp and Marson, *Folk Songs from Somerset*, First Series, p. 14; Leather, *Folk-Lore of Herefordshire*, pp. 202 f.

¹³² Cf. Brand, *Popular Antiquities*, II, 283: "In England it was formerly the fashion to mourn a twelvemonth for very near relations."

¹³³ No. 295 A 8. Cf. B 16. In B the motive for the dancing seems to be revenge: "O never will I forget, forgive, so long as I have breath; I'll dance above, etc." This incident occurs in American texts of *The Brown Girl*: Campbell and Sharp, *Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, pp. 145 ff., A, B, F. In these versions, however, it is the false-lover who will dance. A 6 reads: "Off from her fingers pulled diamond rings three. Here, take these rings and wear them when you're dancing on me." The ring incident is present in the Child texts and has there to do with the returning of the troth-pledge.

¹³⁴ Nos. 78 A, B, D; 49 C. In text B 10 of no. 49 the maiden harps her lover from his grave.

¹³⁵ For the occurrence of this incident in various traditions see Child, II, 284 ff., 512 f.; III, 513 b; V, 62 f.; 294.

¹³⁶ On pall-bearers see Brand, *op. cit.*, II, 284 ff.

¹³⁷ Child, II, 279.

¹³⁸ No. 85 A 2.

"What bear ye, what bear ye, ye six men tall?

What bear ye on your shoulders?"

"We bear the corpse of Giles Collins,

An old and true lover of yours."

In Skene's copy of *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet* Annie's father and her seven brothers walk at her bier:¹⁷⁰

Seven lang mile or he came near,

He heard a dolefull chear,

Her father and her seven brithern,

Walking at her bier;

The half of it guid red goud,

The other silver clear.

Four and twenty knights carry the "dead coffin" of Fair Helen in a Percy text of *Lord Lovel*:¹⁷¹

He hadna ridden a mile, a mile,

A mile but barelins ten,

When he met four and twenty gallant knights,

Carrying a dead coffin.

"Set down, set down Fair Helen's corps,

Let me look on the dead;"

And out he took a little pen-knife,

And he screeded the winding-sheet.

The progress of the heroine's funeral in *The Gay Goshawk* requires nine days from England into Scotland and passes from one kirk to another with the ringing of bells, the singing of mass, and the dealing of gold. The bier is borne by the heroine's seven "bold brothers":¹⁷²

¹⁶⁹ Cf. B 4, C 5 (Child, V, 225), and text, *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, III, 229 ff.: coffin borne by "six pretty lads." Barbara M. Cra'ster, *ibid.*, IV, 106, discusses the foregoing text of *Lady Alice* (George Collins) and its probable derivation from the same source as the ballad *Clerk Colvill* (42). See also texts of no. 85 (Child, III, 514 f.): first version, "six tall men;" second version, "four tall men."

¹⁷⁰ No. 73 G 27.

¹⁷¹ No. 75 I 12. Cf. a variant of *Lady Maisry* (65), Sharp and Marson, *Folk Songs from Somerset*, Third Series, p. 57: "then he saw eight noble, noble men, a-bearing of her pall." On bearing the coffin as depicted in *Bonny Barbara Allan* (84) see Burne, *Shropshire Folk-Lore*, pp. 544, 299.

¹⁷² No. 96 A 24 f.

The firstin kirk that they came till,¹⁷³
 They gard the bells be rung,
 An the nextin kirk that they came till,
 They gard the mess be sung

The thirdin kirk that they came till,
 They dealt gold for her sake,
 An the fourthin kirk that they came till,
 Lo, there they met her make!

In a Motherwell copy of this ballad the body appears to have been borne on a steed: ¹⁷⁴

"But now she is dead, and she's new come from her steed,¹⁷⁵
 And she's ready to lay in the ground."

In *The Earl of Aboyne* "four-an-twenty o the noblest lords" convey the corpse of Peggy Ewan: ¹⁷⁶

There waur four-an-twenty o the noblest lords¹⁷⁷
 That Lonnon could aford him,
 A' clead in black frae the saidle to the hat,
 To convey the corpse o Peggy Ewan.

The funeral procession of Queen Jane is not unworthy of majesty. In the Percy version of this ballad "trumpets in mourning so sadly did sound, and the pikes and the muskets did trail on the ground."¹⁷⁸ In Kinloch's copy something as to the order of the procession is indicated: ¹⁷⁹

Six and six coaches, and six and six more,
 And royal King Henry went mourning before;
 O two and two gentlemen carried her away,
 But royal King Henry went weeping away.

According to Jamieson's text, King Henry is in black and rides a black steed; likewise in black are men, ladies, pages,

¹⁷³ Cf. C 20 f.; E 31 f.; G 40 f.; and texts, Child, IV, 483, sts. 21 f.; IV, 484, st. after 22. This last text reads: "The third Scotts kirk that ye gang to ye's gar them blaw the horn."

¹⁷⁴ B 19.

¹⁷⁵ According to this version the journey is made partly by sea: "Many a mile by land they went, and many a league by sea."

¹⁷⁶ No. 235 E 7. On following the corpse to the grave see Brand, *op. cit.*, II, 249 ff.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. F 12: "fifty o the bravest lords." Cf. text, Greig, *Traditional Ballads*, p. 181: "Fifteen o the noblest lords."

¹⁷⁸ *The Death of Queen Jane* (170 A 6).

¹⁷⁹ B 7.

and maids, and the "trumpets they sounded" and the "cannons did roar."¹⁸⁰ Processional torches are found only in the Bell text:¹⁸¹

So black was the mourning, and white were the wands,
Yellow, yellow the torches they bore in their hands;¹⁸²
The bells they were muffled, and mournful did play,¹⁸³
While the royal Queen Jane she lay cold in the clay.

Six knights and six lords bore her corpse through the grounds,
Six dukes followed after, in black mourning gownds;
The flower of Old England was laid in cold clay,
Whilst the royal King Henrie came weeping away.

There is no evidence in the ballads of leading the dead man's horse in the funeral train, unless there be a hint of it in *Young Waters*, where the hero's "horse bot and his saddle" are taken to the scene of his execution,¹⁸⁴ the "heiding-hill."¹⁸⁵

The Grave. With respect to burial proper the ballads yield evidence as to the place and manner of burial, such as locating the grave, orientation, burial of belongings with the dead, and distinctions in burial. To begin with we should note that the dying often give instructions concerning their grave, an incident that recalls death-bed testaments,¹⁸⁶ the directions of the dying to deal "white bread and wine" at

¹⁸⁰ C 6.

¹⁸¹ D 5 f.

¹⁸² "The custom of using torches and lights at funerals or in funeral processions," says Brand (*op. cit.*, II, 276), "appears to have been of long standing."

¹⁸³ Cf. an American variant of this piece, Sharp, *One Hundred English Folksongs*, p. 68: "yellow, yellow were the flamboys they carried in their hands." Observe the interesting corruption of "flamboys" in an English variant, *Journal of the English Folk-Song Society*, V, 257: "yellow was the flower, my boys, he carried in his hands." See also *The Duke of Bedford* (Child, V, 298, st. 7): "And pretty were the flamboys that they carried in their hands." In the foregoing American and English variants of *Queen Jane* there are fiddling and dancing to celebrate the birth of the prince, an incident not found in the Child versions.

¹⁸⁴ No. 94, st. 13 f. *Young Waters'* son and lady are also taken to the "heiding-hill." Buchan's copy (Child, II, 344, sts. 20 f.) includes the condemned man's hounds and "gos-hawk" as well.

¹⁸⁵ Ballad executions often take place on a hill. Cf. no. 93 D 30: "false nurse was burnt on the mountain hill-head;" no. 271 A 104: "burnte him eke vpon a hyll."

the wake and money to the poor,¹⁸⁷ as well as the dying request of certain ballad heroes that their friends avenge them.¹⁸⁸ The dying boy in *The Twa Brothers*, the lover in *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet*, little Sir Hugh in *The Jew's Daughter*, and "bully" Bewick in *Bewick and Graham*, as well as others, are very much concerned as to the manner of their sepulture. And we must not overlook Robin Hood's interesting specifications for his burial.¹⁸⁹ Lord Barnard orders his grave with a succinctness of which Browning's Bishop is incapable:¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁶ See nos 11, 12, 13. On the death-bed testament see E. C. Perrow, *The Last Will and Testament in Literature, Publications of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences*, XVII. Respecting the ill wishes that occur in certain of these legacies, Prior (*Ancient Danish Ballads*, II, 369) observes: "From the ill wishes that accompany some of the gifts we may suppose that people attached some supernatural power to the dying words of the testator."

Prior's observation finds support in the poetic Edda (*Fafnismol*), where we read that Sigurth concealed his name because it was thought in olden times that "the word of a dying man might have great power if he cursed his foe by his name."

¹⁸⁷ See *supra*, pp. 95 ff.

¹⁸⁸ As in nos. 191 A 23, C 16, D 15; 193 B 41.

¹⁸⁹ "Our British ballad-commonplace of instructions given by a dying person about a 'marble-stone' and the inscription thereon, etc., is found often in these Swiss songs, the phraseology in some cases being strikingly similar to ours." (Lucy Broadwood, rev. S. Grolimund, *Volkslieder aus dem Kanton Aargau, Folk-Lore*, XXIII, 129.)

¹⁹⁰ *Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard* (81 C 32). Cf. A 29, F 24, H 20, I 22, J 25, L 45 f., and original text of F (Child, IV, 477, st. 24). Cf. an American text, Campbell and Sharp, *Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, p. 83: "Go bury me on yonder church hill with Matthy in my arms asleep. . . . And bury Lord Dannel at my feet."

Similar directions given by the dying are found in the following pieces: nos 12 H 11, S 5 (Child, I, 500), as in Baring-Gould, *A Garland of Country Song*, no. 38; 49 A 4, B 5, C 6, D 8 f., E 8, F 9, H 5 (Child, V, 218), and text, st. 5 (Child, IV, 460), as in American texts, Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, pp. 33, 36; 73 D d (Child, II, 196), D f (Child, II, 197), as in American variants, J A F L, XIX, 253 ff., a, b, c; XXVIII, 152; Mackenzie, *Quest of the Ballad*, p. 99: "He ordered a coffin to be made, a coffin both wide and long, etc."; Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, pp. 56, 58, A, B; A 13 reads: "Go dig my grave both wide and deep, and paint my coffin black, and bury me, etc."; no. 85 A 4: "And bury me in Saint Mary's church, . . . And make me a garland of marjoram, etc.", C 7 (Child, V, 226); no. 96, all versions: a maiden instructs her parents to bury her in Scotland; no. 155 A, B, C, E, F, M, O, T (Child, V, 241); no. 211, st. 51.

With this incident compare that of a dying person's asking that his bed (*bed* often euphemistic for grave) be made' no. 7 B 16, C 14, as in Greig, *Folk-Song of the North-East*, art. LVII, and American texts,

"A grave, a grave," Lord Barnet cryde,¹⁹¹
 "Prepare to lay us in;
 My lady shall lie on the upper side,¹⁹²
 Cause she's of the better kin."

It is a fitting conclusion to the career of Robin Hood that the dying outlaw should mark the spot for his grave by the flight of an arrow:¹⁹³

"But give me my bent bow in my hand,¹⁹⁴
 And a broad arrow I'll let flee;
 And where this arrow is taken up,
 There shall my grave digged be."

A somewhat similar, and possibly identical incident, occurs in *Sheath and Knife*. The brother-lover is thus instructed by his dying sister:¹⁹⁵

"Now when that ye hear me gie a loud cry,
 Shoot frae thy bow an arrow and there let me lye.¹⁹⁶
 "And when that ye see I am lying dead,
 Then ye'll put me in a grave, wi a turf at my head."

Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, pp. 10, 12, 13, 15; no. 42 A 13, B 10, C 8; no. 52 B 12; no. 84 A 9; no. 233 B 21, C 40; and also in most versions of no. 12, as in A. "mother, mak my bed soon." The foregoing citations are not meant to be exhaustive for this commonplace.

¹⁹¹ Lord Barnard's remorse, as in A 27 ff., and B 12 f., is among the beautiful incidents in ballad literature.

¹⁹² On distinctions in burial see *infra*, pp. 129 ff.

¹⁹³ *Robin Hood's Death* (120 B 16). Cf. A 26 f.

¹⁹⁴ An important note bearing upon the incident of shooting an arrow to locate a grave, a note the date of which is later than Child, is found in *Folk-Lore*, XII, 305 and n.: W. B. Gerish cites a popular account relative to Piers Shonkes and his choice of a burial place. This incident, says Mr. Gerish, "resembles an incident in the Robin Hood hero-tale." "The chief variant is, that when Piers was on his death-bed he called for his bow and arrow and shot it at random from his window, commanding that he should be buried where the arrow fell."

Child (*Ballads*, II, 499), with reference to Hindoo, Greek, and Slavic tales, notes the occurrence of the incident of shooting an arrow to "determine where a wife is to be sought." Arrows were formerly used in divination. See Aubrey, *Remaines of Gentilisme and Judiasme*, pp. 92, 116.

¹⁹⁵ No. 16 A 3 f. Cf. B 2, C 3, and *Leesome Brand* (15 A 27 ff., B 4 ff.). The incident of the arrow does not occur in an Aberdeenshire version of *Leesome Brand*, Greig, *Traditional Ballads*, pp. 16 f.

¹⁹⁶ With respect to *Sheath and Knife* Child (*Ballads*, I, 185) says: "The directions in 3, 4 receive light from a passage in 'Robin Hood's Death.' But later (*ibid.*, III, 103 n.) he concludes that the arrow was not meant to determine the place of a grave but rather "that the arrow is to leave the bow at the moment when the soul shoots from the body." It is possible that the white hind of the story is the animal form taken by the soul of the dead mother.

The kirk-yard receives most of the ballad dead. Giles Collins would forego such sepulture, however, in order to lie under "Lady Annice's wall":¹⁹⁷

"O bury me not in our churchyard,¹⁹⁸
But under Lady Annice's wall"

In view of the possible connection between *Lady Alice* and *Clerk Colvill*,¹⁹⁹ a ballad of the supernatural, is it not probable that Giles Collins' request may arise from his having had commerce with a mermaid, an attachment that would unfit him for burial in sacred ground? In any event, burial within the churchyard is a ballad desideratum, although again fate decrees against such sepulture in *Bessy Bell and Mary Gray*. The "bonnie lasses" had "thought to lye in Methven kirk-yard, amang their noble kin," but "they maun lye in Stronach haugh, to biek forenent the sin."²⁰⁰ As a rule, however, the ballad dead fare better. In Bromsgrove churchyard lies the old lady in *Sir Lionel* along with her slayer Sir Ryalas.²⁰¹ The "pretty boy" in *Lord Randal* finds an interment no less happy,²⁰² as do also the dead in *The Two Brothers*,²⁰³ *Sweet William's Ghost*,²⁰⁴ *Willie and Earl Richard's Daughter*,²⁰⁵ *Sir Hugh*,²⁰⁶ and *Robin Hood's Death*, as well as *Robin Hood's Progress to Nottingham*,²⁰⁷ not to mention others. But we must not forget those ballad lovers whom death cannot part

¹⁹⁷ Child, III, 514, st. 2.

¹⁹⁸ Cf. text, *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, III, 299. The lover asks to be buried "under that marble stone, that's against fair Helen's hall." Cf. American texts, Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South*, pp. 110 ff., A, B, E. A 5: "Go bury me under the white marble stone, at the foot of fair Ellen's green hill."

¹⁹⁹ On the possible relationship between these two ballads see discussion by Barbara M. Craister in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, III, 299; IV, 106.

²⁰⁰ No. 201, st. 3.

²⁰¹ No. 18 C 16. Cf. D 11, and C 16, D 11 (Child, I, 215).

²⁰² No. 12 H 11. I 8: "corner of the churchyard."

²⁰³ No. 49, all versions save G and the Hudson text (Child, V, 290). A and D: "Kirkland fair;" E: at "yon kirk-style." Cf. American text, *J A F L*, XXX, 294: "beneath the churchyard tree;" Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South*, p. 34: "churchyard."

²⁰⁴ No. 77 A, C, E. In A and C the churchyard is far beyond the sea. Cf. *Proud Lady Margaret* (47 D 10, E 6).

²⁰⁵ No. 102 B.

²⁰⁶ No. 155 F: "green churchyard." Cf. American text, *J A F L*, XIX, 294, b: "Dug his grave by a juniper tree."

²⁰⁷ Nos. 120 B 19; 139, st. 18: "buried them all a row."

and whose souls spring from the grave in the form of loving plants.²⁰⁸ The lovers are buried, the one in "St. Mary's kirk," the other in "Mary's quire," or in the "lower chancel" and the "higher," or in "the east" and in "the west," according to *Lady Alice*; ²⁰⁹ or within and without "kirk-wa," as in *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet*.² The lovers in *Eard Brand* both lie within the church: ²¹¹

The one was buried in Mary's kirk,²¹²

The other in Mary's quire;

The one sprung up a bonnie bush,

And the other a bonny brier.

²⁰⁸ The priority of romance or ballad is discussed by Child (I, 98) in connection with this incident: "The idea of love-animated plants has been thought to be derived from the romance of Tristran, where it also occurs; agreeably to a general principle, somewhat hastily assumed, that when romances and popular ballads have anything in common, priority belongs to the romances. The question as to precedence in this instance is an open one, for the fundamental conception is not less a favorite with ancient Greek than with mediaeval imagination."

Child might well have added that this beautiful incident gives evidence of the belief that the soul may at death pass into the form of a tree, a belief that is current the world over in the traditions not only of civilized peoples but of savage or primitive races as well.

²⁰⁹ No. 85 A 5, B 6. Another text (Child, III, 515) reads: "in the east church-yard." I find no instance in this commonplace of making the grave in the north or the south.

²¹⁰ No. 73 A 29: "Lord Thomas was buried without kirk-wa."

²¹¹ No. 7 C 17.

²¹² Cf. B 18: "St. Mary's kirk" and "Mary's quire;" as in Greig, *Folk-Song of the North-East*, art. LVII; *Traditional Ballads*, p. 6; American texts, Campbell and Sharp, *Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, pp. 10, 14: "by the church door," "at the upper church yard." Other ballads that read as does no. 7 C 17 are: nos. 64 A 30, E 20; 73 B 39, E 42, F 36, G 29, and text, Child, V, 224, st. 27, as well as texts, Greig, *Traditional Ballads*, p. 56; *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, II, 105 ff., fourth version. Variation in the name of the church: no. 75 B 11, F 6 (St. John's), H 9 (St. Pancras'), I 16, as also in McGill, *Folk Songs of the Kentucky Mountains*, p. 10 (St. Pancras); Greig, *Folk-Song of the North-East*, art. CLIX (St. Patrick's); Greig, *Traditional Ballads*, p. 58 (St. Pancras); nos. 76 A 35; 87 A 20, B 15; 222, st. 23 (Child, V, 262). Other readings for this commonplace: no. 73 D h (Child, II, 198): "end of church;" no. 74 A 18: "lower chancel" and "higher," as in 85 C 8 (Child, V, 226); cf. text of no. 74, Mackenzie, *Quest of the Ballad*, p. 126: "chancel gate" and "choir;" text, McGill, *op. cit.*, p. 70; "lower" and "higher" churchyard; text, J A F L, XXX, 304: "high churchyard" and "mire." Cf. no. 75 A 10, E 9: "high chancel" and choir. For other readings of no. 74 with slight variations see Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, pp. 65, 67, 68; no. 75 in Pound, *American Ballads and Songs*, p. 7; *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, III, 74 f.; no. 84 in Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, pp. 91, 93, 96, 98; Wyman and Brockway, *Lonesome Tunes*, p. 5. No. 76 C 16 (Child) reads: "Mary's isle," "Mary's quire."

Disposal of the dead in balladry means virtually always burial beneath the ground. Young Andrew was never "buried vnder mold," however, for he was slain by a terrible wolf that got into the story, says Professor Child, no one knows how.²¹³ The grave is usually described as "lang and large," "braid and lang," or "wide and deep," as in *The Twa Brothers*:²¹⁴

"Oh brither dear, take me on your back,²¹⁵
Carry me to yon kirkyard,
And dig a grave baith wide and deep,
And lay my body there."

For her murdered babes the cruel mother makes a "hole baith deep and wide":²¹⁶

She has howked a hole baith deep and wide,²¹⁷
She has put them baith side by side.

"Let me have length and breadth enough," is Robin Hood's dying request.²¹⁸ "She wants to be laid in your ground," say Janet's seven brethren in *The Gay Goshawk*,²¹⁹ and in *The Three Ravens* a fallow doe carries her dead knight to "earthen lake."²²⁰

In the ballads *Edward* and *Lizie Wan* Gummere sees a hint of boat-burial.²²¹ In the former piece Davie tells his mother the kind of death he would like to die:²²²

"I'll set my foot in a bottomless ship,²²³
Mother lady, mother lady:
I'll set my foot in a bottomless ship,
And ye'll never see mair o me."

²¹³ *Young Andrew* (48, st. 37).

²¹⁴ No. 49 A 5.

²¹⁵ Cf. B 5, D 8, F 9, and A b 5 (Child, IV, 460), H 5 (Child, V, 218). Cf. American texts, Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, pp. 33, 36.

²¹⁶ *The Cruel Mother* (20 C 4). Cf. text, Mackenzie, *Quest of the Ballad*, p. 105: "hole seven feet deep." Cf. nos. 15 B 9, 16 A 6.

²¹⁷ On the burial of two or more in one grave see *infra*, pp. 130 ff.

²¹⁸ *Robin Hood's Death* (120 B 18).

²¹⁹ No. 96 D 12.

²²⁰ No. 26, st. 8. It is probable that the fallow doe is the slain knight's mistress in the form of a deer.

²²¹ *Germanic Origins*, p. 325 and n.

²²² No. 18 A 9.

²²³ Cf. *Lizie Wan* (51 A 11, B 13). A 11:

"I'll set my foot in a bottomless boat,
And swim to the sea-ground."

That Sir Andrew Barton may be buried under ground, his enemies, after beheading him, bind him to "borden tre" so that he may float to shore. About his middle they tie "five hundreth angels" to insure his proper sepulture: ²²⁴

But of he cut the dead man's heade,²²⁵
And bounde his bodye toe borden tre,
And tiede five hundreth angels about his midle,
That was toe cause hime buried toe bee.

There is only one actual burial at sea in the English ballads, that of the "little cabin-boy," an incident that is the distinguishing feature of a stall copy of *The Sweet Trinity*, but which is found in American variants as well: ²²⁶

They laid him on the deck, and it's there he soon died; ²²⁷
Then they sewed him up in an old cow's-hide,
And they threw him overboard, to go down with the tide,
And they sunk him in the Low Lands Low.

The early practice of heaping the grave with stones is reflected in the ballad of *The Cruel Mother*. The ghosts of the babes have returned to accuse the murderess: ²²⁸

"Ye happit the hole wi mossy stanes
And there ye left our wee bit banes."

²²⁴ No. 167, st. 73 (Child, IV, 502 ff.).

²²⁵ Cf. A 70:

And about his middle three hundred crownes:
"Whersoever thou lands, itt will bury thee."

For the occurrence of this incident in literature see Professor Kittredge's references, Child, IV, 502; V, 245. It is found in the Danish ballad *Sir John Rimord's Son's Shrift*. Translation, Prior, *Ancient Danish Ballads*, II, 232, reads:

Three money-pouches took Sir John,
And firmly about him bound:
"A boon for him who lays my corse
Beneath some holy ground."

²²⁶ No. 286 C 7.

²²⁷ Cf. C e 12, f 7, G 9 (Child, V, 142). In certain texts (Child, V, 139, 140) the wrapping in the "bull's-skin" is not meant as part of the burial. Cf. text, *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, II, 244: "black bear skin" as disguise. Cf. American texts, *J A F L*, XXIII, 429; Pound, *American Ballads and Songs*, pp. 24 ff.

²²⁸ No. 20 L 7.

According to other texts, she "has covered them oer wi a marble stane."²²⁹ The simple "stane" in *The Twa Brothers* has a more ancient ring:²³⁰

He laid him in the cauld cauld clay,
And he curt him wi a stane,

Another text of this piece adds "good green turf" to the stone:²³¹

"You'll put a good stone ou my head,
Another at my feet,
A good green turf upon my breast
That the sounder I m[a]y sleep."

The marble stone as a grave covering²³² is found again in *The Cruel Brother*: "She lies aneath yon marble stone."²³³

Green sod appears to be a *sine qua non* of the ballad grave. In a fragmentary text of *The Famous Flower of Serving-Men* a maiden, after sewing her love's winding sheet, watching his corpse, bearing it upon her back,²³⁴ lays him in the grave and heaps him with green sod:²³⁵

I took the corpse then on my back,
And whiles I gaed, and whiles I sat;
I digd a grave, and laid him in,
And hapd him wi the sod sae green.

According to *The Twa Brothers*, a green sod laid upon the breast of the dead causes sound sleep.²³⁶ In *Sweet William's Ghost* a "wand o bonny birk" performs a like office.²³⁷ The

²²⁹ C 5; H 6: "with a marble stone, for dukes and lords to walk upon;" I 6. Cf. text, *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, III, 70 f., second version; American text, Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, p. 30: the mother hides the bloody knife "under the marble stone."

²³⁰ No. 49 C 11.

²³¹ H 6 (Child, V, 218).

²³² "This custom of laying flat stones in our churches and churchyards over the graves of the better class of folk, for the purpose of inscribing thereon the name, age, and character of the deceased, has been transmitted from very ancient times." (Brand, *op. cit.*, II, 301.)

²³³ No. 11 B 28. Cf. *Lord Randal* (12 H 11): "Put a stone to my head and a flag to my feet;" *The Twa Brothers* (49 F 16): "a head-stane at his head, another at his feet."

²³⁴ Cf. a similar incident in *The Three Ravens* (26, st. 8). "She got him vpon her backe, and carried him to earthen lake."

²³⁵ No. 106, sts. 4 f. (Child, IV, 492).

²³⁶ No. 49 F 16, H 6 (Child, V, 218).

²³⁷ No. 77 G 1, and text, Child, IV, 474, st. 1.

dying sister in *Sheath and Knife* asks for a "turf" at her head,²¹⁵ and Robin Hood directs that a "green sod" be placed under his head, another at his feet, and that his grave be made of "gravel and green":²¹⁶

"Lay me a green sod under my head,
And another at my feet;
And lay my bent bow by my side,
Which was my music sweet;
And make my grave of gravel and green,²⁴⁰
Which is most right and meet."

The "green gravel" of Robin's grave recalls the ring-game of *Green Gravel*, which originally may have been "a child's dramatic imitation of an old burial ceremony."²⁴¹

Orientation seems to determine the position or direction of the grave in the ballad of *The Cruel Mother*:²⁴²

She howkit a grave forenent the sun,²⁴³
And there she buried her twa babes in.

According to other copies, she "howkit a hole before the sun,"²⁴⁴ "ayont the sun,"²⁴⁵ "anent the meen."²⁴⁶ At this point we may raise the question as to whether Motherwell's Agnes Laird copy of our ballad furnishes an instance of burial alive. Professor Child so explains the following lines:²⁴⁷

²³⁸ No. 16 A 4.

²³⁹ *Robin Hood's Death* (120 B 17).

²⁴⁰ Cf. A 26: "And there make me a full fayre graue, of grauell and of greete."

²⁴¹ Alice Gomme, *Traditional Games of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, I, 169. On the "gravel and green" of the ballad and the singing-game *Green Gravel* see A. Gilchrist in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, VI, 83.

²⁴² No. 20 E 7. Cf. N 7 (Child, I, 504): "fornent the seen;" as in text, Child, IV, 451, st. 5.

²⁴³ Cf. the "sun-side" of the grave in *Bewick and Graham* (211, st. 51); g 51 (Child, IV, 150): "sunney side;" cf. *Little Musgrave* (81 F 24): "sunny side" of grave. See swearing by the sun in nos. 156 F 6, 200 B 17. Cf. "marry thee under the sun" in no. 2, st. 14 (Child, IV, 440). Cf. the following from a Danish ballad *King Waldmar's Suit to Queen Dagmar*, trans. Prior, *Ancient Danish Ballads*, II, 123:

Sir Strangé he turn'd him towards the sun,
And solemnly made reply;

²⁴⁴ H 5.

²⁴⁵ A 2.

²⁴⁶ F 8.

²⁴⁷ " . . . or, H, ties them hand and feet and buries them alive."
(*Ballads*, I, 218.)

She took the ribbons off her head,²⁴⁸
 She tied the little babes hand and feet.

She howkit a hole before the sun,
 She's laid these three bonnie babes in.

In other versions, however, the mother slays the babes before burying them and it is possible that this incident was merely omitted by the singer of the foregoing version.²⁴⁹

The ancient and primitive practice of burying with the dead certain of their possessions is reflected in three fine ballads, *Robin Hood's Death*, *The Twa Brothers*, and *Sir Hugh*. Among other instructions relative to his burial Robin Hood directs that his sword be set at his head, his arrows at his feet, and his bow by his side:²⁵⁰

"And sett my bright sword at my head,²⁵¹
 Mine arrowes at my feete,
 And lay my vew-bow by my side,
 My met-yard wi

Nor are Robin's instructions in the Paisley text to be ignored: "Let me have length and breadth enough;"²⁵² for the out-

²⁴⁸ H 4 f. Cf. C 2, E 6, F 6, G 3, I 5, etc.

²⁴⁹ But a clear case of burial alive occurs in Norse analogues of *Leesome Brand* (15), concerning which incident Child remarks (*Ballads*, I, 180: ". . . . ; the horrible circumstance of the children being buried alive is much more likely to be slurred over or omitted at a later day than to be added."

²⁵⁰ No. 120 A 27. B 27 reads: "And lay my bent bow by my side, which was my music sweet." Cf. *Clerk Colvill* (42 A 13): a dying man requests, "Oh, brither, brither unbend my bow, 't will never be bent by me again." Child quotes (*Ballads*, III, 104) from a Russian popular song that has "an interesting likeness to the conclusion of Robin Hood's death. The last survivor of a band of brigands, feeling death to be nigh, exclaims:

'At my feet fasten my horse,
 At my head set a life-bestowing cross,
 In my right hand place my keen sabre.'

In the Danish ballad *Orm Ungersvend og Bermer-Rise*, a song with certain resemblances to *King Estmere* (60) we find a splendid example of the barrow-grave and the incident of a magic sword buried with the dead. See translation, Prior, *op. cit.*, I, 132. In his *Pagan Scotland* Anderson describes a burial in the Western Isles of a wicking-smith with his tools, hammer, tongs, etc.

²⁵¹ In balladry swords are often both "brown" and "bright." See Gummere, *Old English Ballads*, p. 345.

²⁵² B 18. So in no. 49 B 5, D 8. Child (III, 104) notes the dimensions of the grave in a Greek song: "Dimos, twenty years a Klepht, tells his comrades to make his tomb wide and high enough to fight in it, standing up, and to leave a window, so that the swallows may tell him that spring has come"

law's grave suggests the roomy barrow of ancient times.²⁵³ "The 'met-yard' of the last line is one of the last things we should think Robin would care for," notes Child in his introduction to this piece,²⁵⁴ but later he observes that the met-yard or measuring-rod is a necessary part of an archer's equipment.²⁵⁵

In this matter of funeral *mobilier* a stanza in Jamieson's text of *The Twa Brothers*, as does that in a Motherwell copy, comes very near the passage in *Robin Hood's Death*:

"Ye'll lay my arrows at my head,²⁵⁶
My bent bow at my feet,
My sword and buckler at my side,
As I was wont to sleep."

The Motherwell text makes something of a compromise between Christianity and paganism:²⁵⁷

"Lay by bible at my head," he says,²⁵⁸
"My chaunter at my feet,
My bow and arrows by my side,
And soundly I will sleep."

Little Sir Hugh is orthodox enough. He asks for burial in the churchyard and that a Bible be placed at his head, a Testament at his feet, and pen and ink at every side:²⁵⁹

²⁵³ See Vigfusson-Powell, *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, I, 420.

²⁵⁴ *Op. cit.*, III, 103 n.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, V, 297: "The met-yard, being a necessary part of an archer's equipment for such occasions as p. 29, 148, 158; p. 75, 397; p. 93, 28; p. 201, 18, 21, may well enough be buried with him."

In a curious tale relating to Cormac Ogmundsson's father the met-yard is employed in divination. "When a man had laid out his house 'it was the belief in those days, that as the meteyard fitted, when it measured a second time, so the man's luck should fit.'" (Vigfusson-Powell, *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, II, 32.) This note is not uninteresting in view of Robin's divinatory method of locating his grave in B 16 by shooting an arrow.

²⁵⁶ No. 49 D 9. The instructions in D 8, A 5, C 10, F 9, "lift me upon your back, etc." occur also in no. 120 A 26; no. 106, sts. 4 f (Child, IV, 494); cf. no. 26, st. 8.

²⁵⁷ B 6.

²⁵⁸ Cf. American text, Campbell and Sharp, *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, p. 34:

He buried his bible at his head,
His hymn book at his feet,
His bow and arrow by his side,
And now he's fast asleep.

²⁵⁹ *Sir Hugh* (155 E 20).

"Put a Bible at my head," he says,²⁶⁰

"And a Testament at my feet,

And pen and ink at every side,

And I'll lie still and sleep." ²⁶¹

At this point it may be well to give certain stanzas from Motherwell's version of *Sweet William's Ghost*, stanzas which, says Child, are "not trivial or unimpressive" and "cannot be an accretion of modern date."²⁶² Marjory has followed her lover's ghost or rather her lover's corpse to the churchyard. The grave opens up, Sweet William resumes his wormy bed, and Marjory questions him concerning the other strange occupants of his grave: ²⁶³

"What three things are these, Sweet William," she says,

"That stands here at your head?"

"It's three maidens, Marjorie," he says,

"That I promised once to wed."

"What three things are these, Sweet William," she says,

"That stands here at your side?"

"It is three babes, Marjorie," he says,

"That these three maidens had."

"What three things are these, Sweet William," she says,

"That stands here at your feet?"

"It is three hell-hounds, Marjorie," he says,

"That's waiting my soul to keep."

²⁶⁰ Cf. F 14: "Bible" and "Testament;" N 15 f.: "grave large and deep," "coffin of hazel and green birch," "Bible at my head, . . . busker (?) at my feet, . . . little prayer-book at my right side;" H, I, and M: say nothing as to burial, but Bible and Testament are found in H 7; I 5: Bible, Testament, and Catechise-Book "in his own heart's blood;" M 6: "Seven foot Bible at my head and my feet;" T 7 (Child, V, 241) "Prayer-Book at my head, . . . grammar at my feet, that all the little schoolfellows as they pass by may read them for my sake;" S 7 (Child, IV, 497 f.): Bible, Testament, and prayer-book.

Cf. texts, *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, I, 264: Bible and Testament; *ibid.*, V, 253 ff., second version: "prayer-book at his head, . . . testament at his feet, . . . Bible at his heart." J A F L, XIX, 293. prayer-book and Bible; *ibid.*, p. 294: marble slab at head, "his ball" at feet; *ibid.*, XXIX, 164 ff., first version: prayer-book and Bible; as in Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, p. 111, and C. A. Smith, "Ballads Surviving in the United States," *Musical Quarterly*, p. 15. Cf. texts, Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South*, pp. 120 ff., A, B, C, D, E, F. Cf. variant of no. 73, Cox, *ibid.*, p. 52: "new Bible under my head."

²⁶¹ A hint here that the ghost would walk in case the instructions were not carried out.

²⁶² *Op. cit.*, II, 227.

²⁶³ No. 77 C 11 ff. May there not be here a reminiscence of the household of the Scandinavian barrow?

In one version of *The Unquiet Grave* there is a hint of the practice so well illustrated in *Robin Hood's Death* and *The Twa Brothers*, the practice, namely, of burying belongings with the dead. It was anciently the custom to inter with the dead man something of his earthly treasure in the nature of gold and jewels. The "gold" and "wealth" spoken of in the following passage give evidence of this old custom:

A twelvemonth and a day being past,²⁶⁴
 His ghost did rise and speak:
 "What makes you mourn all on my grave?
 For you will not let me sleep."
 "It is not your gold I want, dear love,²⁶⁵
 Nor yet your wealth I crave;
 But one kiss from your lily-white lips
 Is all I wish to have."

An interesting feature of funerary practice in the ballads is that of distinctions in burial. These distinctions rest upon differences in the rank of the dead, upon guilt or sin, or upon success in arms, and depend, we may suppose, as in the incident of the sympathetic plants, partly, at least, upon the artistic purposes of the story. This last-named incident, however, illustrating as it does burial in the chancel, lower and higher, at the church door, and so on, recognizes in a general way the desirability of sepulture within the church and in that part of the church that is nearest the altar.²⁶⁶

²⁶⁴ No. 78 B 3 f.

²⁶⁵ Cf. the Danish ballad *Orm Ungersvend og Beimer-Rise* in which Childe Orm seeks out his father in his barrow in order to gain possession of the "Sword Birthing." Prior's translation (*Ancient Danish Ballads*, I, 135) reads:

"And is it thou art come, childe Orm,
 My youngest son so dear?
 And is it gold, or silver plate,
 Or coin, thou seekest here?"

"I want nor gold, nor silver plate,
 Nor coin from out thy grave,
 But all to win a lovely maid
 Sword Birthing come to crave."

²⁶⁶ With respect to interment in church and churchyard Brand (*op. cit.*, II, 293) quotes Laurence "in a sermon preached before Charles in 1640": "'Churchyards they thought profaned by sports, the whole circuit both before and after Christ was privileged for refuge, none out of communion of the kirke permitted to lie there, any consecrate ground preferred for interment before that which was not consecrate,

The general practice of avoiding burial at the north side of the church because that side is reserved for criminals, suicides, and unbaptized infants,²⁶⁷ may be inferred from the absence in our folksong of any reference to burial north of the church. However, there is no reference to the south side, either, though in foreign ballads, as seen again in the loving plant motif, the graves of the lovers are said to be north and south of the church.²⁶⁸

There can be little doubt, at any rate, as to the meaning of the burial site in the Percy text of *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet*. It is altogether probable that we have here an exemplification of the custom or law that denies ecclesiastical sepulture to a murderer or suicide. Lord Thomas has slain the "nut-browne" bride, and, calling to Fair Annet, herself mortally wounded, to await him in her passing, he strikes the dagger "untill his heart." But he may not lie with her in the church. He is buried "without kirk-wa":²⁶⁹

Lord Thomas was buried without kirk-wa,²⁷⁰

Fair Annet within the quiere,

And o the tane thair grew a birk,

The other a bonny briere.

In Buchan's version of *Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard* Mungrove must lie in the "lowest flat" of the grave because he is "deepest in the sin":²⁷¹

"A grave, a grave," said Lord Burnett,

"To bury these two in;

Lay Mungrove in the lowest flat,

He's deepest in the sin."

According to the foregoing ballad, the grave is a frank respecter of persons and would preserve the social distinc-

and that in an higher esteem which was in an higher degree of consecration, and that in the highest which was nearest the altar."

On the place of burial as illustrated by the commonplace of loving plants see *supra*, p. 121 and note 212.

²⁶⁷ See Brand, *op. cit.*, II, 292-96.

²⁶⁸ In his introduction to *Earl Brand* (7), *Ballads*, I, 96 ff., Child notes the following: Norwegian: "the lovers are laid north and south of the church;" Swedish: "are buried south and north in the church-yard;" a German ballad: "the maid is buried in the church-yard, the knight under the gallows."

²⁶⁹ No. 73 A 29.

²⁷⁰ This distinction does not occur in Child's other versions.

²⁷¹ No. 81 L 46

tions of the Upper World.²⁷² Lord Barnard, who, like certain other ballad avengers, suffers remorse for his cruel deed,²⁷³ confides to one grave the two lovers whom he has slain, directing that his wife be laid "on the upper hand, for she came of the better kin":²⁷⁴

"A grave, a grave," Lord Barnard cryd,
 "To put these lovers in;
 But lay my lady on the upper hand,²⁷⁵
 For she came of the better kin."

According to a Motherwell text, the coffin is made for two, but there is recognition none the less of the disparity in rank between the occupants, the one of higher rank to lie on the right hand:²⁷⁶

"Ye'll make a coffin large and wide,
 And lay this couple in;
 And lay her head on his right hand,²⁷⁷
 She's come o the highest kin."

In the original text of the Jamieson version the "sunney side" of the grave is allotted the lady "because of her noble kin":²⁷⁸

"My lady shall lye on the sunny side,
 Because of her noble kin."

In the noble ballad of *Bewick and Graham*, remarkable, according to Scott, "as containing the very latest allusion to the institution of brotherhood in arms,"²⁷⁹ the "sun-side"

²⁷² On such distinctions in primitive or savage life see Rosalind Moss, *Life after Death in Oceania*, pp. 147 f.

²⁷³ Cf. nos. 80, st. 32; 83 A 31 f., E 33; 269 A 11, C 13.

²⁷⁴ A 29. Cf. I 22: "And put Lady Bengwill uppermost, for she's come of the noblest kin."

²⁷⁵ Cf. C 32: "My lady shall lie on the upper side, cause she's of the better kin."

²⁷⁶ J 25.

²⁷⁷ Cf. H 20: a coffin "wide and long," with "my lady at the right hand." On the right hand see *supra*, p. 77 and note 120.

Cf. American text of no. 81, Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, p. 83: "Go bury me on yonder church hill with Matthy in my arms asleep. . . . and bury Lord Dannel at my feet."

²⁷⁸ Child, *op. cit.*, IV, 477, st. 24.

²⁷⁹ *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, ed. T. F. Henderson, III, 75. Cf. *Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough, and William of Cloudesty* (116, st. 4): "They swore them brethen vpon a day, to Englysshe-wood for to gone."

of the grave is generously assigned by Bewick to his slain "brother":²⁸⁰

"Nay, dig a grave both low and wide,
And in it us two pray bury;
But bury my Bully Grahame on the sun-side,²⁸¹
For I'm sure he's won the victory."

As for epitaphs in balladry there are none unless we include those "foolish lines" on Robin Hood's tomb²⁸² and the lines on the hero's tombstone in a text of *Geordie* given in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*.²⁸³ A matter worthy of mention here, however, is the practice in balladry of burying two or more in one grave, a practice in evidence in the foregoing songs that are illustrative of distinctions in burial. It appears also in *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet*:²⁸⁴

"O dig my grave," Lord Thomas replied,²⁸⁵
"Dig it both wide and deep,
And lay Fair Eleanor by my side
And the brown girl at my feet."

We find it again in *Sheath and Knife*:²⁸⁶

He has made a grave that was lang and was deep,²⁸⁷
And he has buried his sister, wi her babe at her feet.

In an American variant of *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet* it seems that the coffin is meant for three:²⁸⁸

He ordered a coffin to be made,²⁸⁹
A coffin both wide and long.
He ordered fair Ellinor at his right side
And the brown girl at his feet.

²⁸⁰ No. 211, st. 51.

²⁸¹ Cf. g 51 (Child, IV, 150): "sunney side."

²⁸² See Child, *op. cit.*, III, 107, 226, 233.

²⁸³ Vol. IV, 89.

²⁸⁴ No. 73 D d (Child, II, 196). There is a possibility here that separate graves are meant but there is no such possibility in a case like that in no. 211, st. 51.

²⁸⁵ Cf. D f (Child, II, 197), D h (Child, II, 198). D h reads: "Bury my mother at my head, Fair Ellenor by my side."

²⁸⁶ No. 16 A 6.

²⁸⁷ The burial here is in the wood, as in *The Bonny Hind* (50, st. 11): "And he has buried his bonny sister among the hollins green."

²⁸⁸ Mackenzie, *Quest of the Ballad*, p. 99.

²⁸⁹ Cf. texts, Cox, *Folk-Songs of the South*, pp. 56 ff., E, G, H, I. G 16: "Place Fair Ellenger in my arms, the brown girl at my feet." Cf. texts, Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, pp. 56 ff., A, B. A 13: "They

The infanticide in *The Cruel Mother* buries her three babes in one grave and covers them with a marble stone.²⁰⁰

In concluding our survey of matters that have to do with burial we may dwell for a moment on the incident of opening the coffin or the grave and turning back or cutting the winding-sheet in order that the bereaved may look upon the dead. Lines from *The Lass of Roch Royal* will serve to illustrate:²⁰¹

He had not rode a mile, a mile,
A mile but barely three,
Till that he spyed her comely corps
Come raking oere the lee.

"Set down, set down these comely corps,²⁰²
Let me look on the dead:"
And out he's ta'en his little pen-knife,
And slitted her winding sheet.

And first he kist her cheek, her cheek,²⁰³
And then he kist her rosy lips,
And then he kist her rosy lips,
But there was no breath within.

We ought to observe, too, that the grave in *Sweet William's Ghost* opens up to admit the *revenant*:²⁰⁴

dug his grave both wide and deep and painted his coffin black, and buried the brown girl in his arms and fair Ellendry at his back." The demands of rime in this last are obvious.

²⁰⁰ No. 20 H 5 f. On the incident of several occupants of one grave Child has this note in his introduction to *Clerk Colvill* (42), *Ballads*, I, 382 n.: "The burial of father, mother, and child in a common grave is found elsewhere in ballads, as in 'Redselille og Medelvold.'" Translation, Prior, *Ancient Danish Ballads*, III, 7, reads:

He dug a grave, was broad and deep,
And laid all three therein to sleep;

²⁰¹ No. 76 A 31.

²⁰² Cf. B 25 ff., and nos. 25 B 12, C 8; 73 F 33, I 39 (Child, IV, 71); 75 D 7, E 8, F 5, H 7; 85 A 3, B 5, C 6 (Child, V, 226), and texts, Child, III, 514, f.; 96 A 26, B 20, C 32 f., D 13, etc.; 239 A 15, B 10. Cf. American texts: no. 75, Campbell and Sharp, *op. cit.*, p. 72; Cox, *op. cit.*, p. 79, A, C; A 7: "He ordered the grave to be opened forth-with;" no. 84, Campbell and Sharp, pp. 90, 92, 95, 96, 97; Mackenzie, *op. cit.*, p. 101. Cf. Scottish text of no. 75, Greig, *Traditional Ballads*, p. 58: "He ordered the grave to be opened wide, and the shroud to be drawn down."

²⁰³ Is there any indication in this procedure to show that its purpose is to make certain that the person is actually dead? See test for death, *supra*, pp. 82 ff.

²⁰⁴ No. 77 C 10.

O there the grave did open up,
And young William he lay down.

Finally, we may point out that as regards the time of burial or the period between death and the disposal of the corpse the ballads speak with little definiteness. We have this, however, from *Young Benjie* to show that the burial followed hard upon the lyke-wake: ²⁹⁵

"The night it is her low lykewake,²⁹⁶
The morn her burial day."

And this from *Young Hunting*, though here the idea is to conceal the corpse: ²⁹⁷

And she has kept that good lord's corpse ²⁹⁸
Three quarters of a year,
Until that word began to spread;
Then she began to fear.

²⁹⁵ No. 86 A 14

²⁹⁶ Cf. *Fair Margaret and Sweet William* (74 A 16): "So much as is dealt at her funeral today, tomorrow shall be dealt at mine."

²⁹⁷ No. 68 E 12.

²⁹⁸ This incident does not occur in other texts.

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STUDIES IN
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THE PURITANS IN THE
AMERICAN ROMANCE

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THE FOREIGNERS IN THE
ATHENIAN EPHEBIA

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PREFACE

"The Foreigners in the Athenian Ephebia" was undertaken at the suggestion, and under the supervision, of Dr C. A. Forbes of the University of Nebraska, to whom I take pleasure in expressing my thanks for guidance, criticism, and help generously given throughout its preparation. I owe him a debt of gratitude also for the privilege of using his book, *Greek Physical Education*, while it was still in manuscript form.

The purpose of this treatise is to derive from our only source, the ephebic inscriptions, all the information now available to us on the foreigners who journeyed to Athens to enrol in the ephebia, how they came to be admitted into the Athenian ephebia, their numbers for each year during the known existence of the ephebia, their provenience, the probable reasons inducing them to leave their native cities for ephebic training, and the treatment they received as members of the ephebic college at Athens.

After the completion of the work by Dr. Forbes, *Greek Physical Education*, in which a thorough examination of the evidence pertaining to the Athenian ephebia was made, it seemed appropriate to reconsider the subject of the foreigners in the Athenian ephebia, making use of the valuable material presented in his chapter on the Athenian ephebia. Such an attempt has been made in this study, and in so far as it has been successful, it may be considered supplementary to the pertinent chapter in the work mentioned.

Of the previous works on this subject, Dumont's chapter on the foreigners, in his book, *Essai sur l'éphébie attique*, is by far the most comprehensive. His work is necessarily incomplete, owing to the fact that he did not have access to all ephebic inscriptions now available, and in some instances his statements are misleading or need revision in the light of fuller evidence. The same must be said of the other works on this subject.

The ethnics of the various places from which foreign ephebi came to the Athenian ephebia have been omitted, as have also several explanatory Greek words and phrases throughout the

work, since the printing establishment issuing this treatise is not equipped with fonts of Greek type. Some few remaining Greek words and phrases have been either translated or transliterated.

I wish to express my keen appreciation for the kindly encouragement and many valuable suggestions given me by Dr. C. G. Lowe, Chairman of the Department of the Classics, and Dr. C. H. Oldfather, Chairman of the Department of History. Dr. C. A. Forbes has put me under further obligation by reading the proof of these pages.

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THE FOREIGNERS IN THE ATHENIAN EPHEBIA

INTRODUCTION

The Greek word, *ephebia*, has two connotations. Properly it designates the state of maturity, both physical and legal, which a youth attained upon the completion of his eighteenth year.¹ From his eighteenth to his twentieth year the Athenian youth was required by law to undergo a system of military and tactical training under the supervision and direction of the state. He was designated *ephebus* during this period. The organization of the entire body of the Athenian youth between the ages of eighteen and twenty is known as the *ephebia*.² It was in essence, as has been pointed out, a state-controlled military college, much like the military academy at West Point.

During the first year, which was spent at the Piraeus, the Athenian *ephebi* received preliminary training in the arts of war.³ Instruction was given in heavy-armed fighting, javelin throwing, archery, in the manipulation of catapults, and, in fact, in every phase of fighting then in vogue.

While the instruction was essentially military in character, great care was taken not to neglect the moral and religious phases of the education of the *ephebi*. At the very outset of their period of training, the *ephebi* were taken in a body to visit the various temples, and to show their reverence for the gods. The religious attitude was considered to be not the least of the civic virtues. Dr. Forbes says, "One is amazed on perusing the long list of festivals, sacred processions, sacrifices, and other religious ceremonials in which the *ephebi* participated."⁴

The larger purpose of the *ephebia* was, not merely to make efficient fighting units of its young manhood, but to develop them into stalwart citizens. During the time of their barracks life, as well as during the second year of their course,

¹ Aristot., *resp. Ath.*, 42, 1.

² Artemidor., *Oneirocr.*, I 54, p. 79 (ed. Hercher); *ephebia* Anth. Pal., VII, 467, 7.

³ Forbes, *Greek Physical Education*, p. 146.

⁴ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

close supervision was exercised over every activity in which they engaged. The Athenian people chose an official, the *kosmetes*, "from the men who led the noblest lives,"⁵ who was supervising director of all the activities of the school, and active head of its faculty of teachers. His duties were numerous. Not least important among his responsibilities toward his charges was "the responsibility for their health, studiousness, discipline, and general virtue."⁶

At the expiration of the first year's service, the full body of ephebi, resplendent in uniform, passed in review before a public assembly in the theater.⁷ At the close of the public drill they were given their armor, a shield, and a spear, and solemnly took the oath, which denoted their entrance into the ranks of the citizens.

Now followed the second year's training. While still continuing their military drill, they were given a first-hand acquaintance with the Athenian system of defense works. They were assigned actual patrol duty on the frontier, as well as guard duty in the forts of Attica. They took part frequently in religious festivals and marched in public processions. Every opportunity was taken to foster their civic consciousness.⁸

This strange phenomenon in democratic Athens—conscription of its youth for a two-year period of military training, leads us to inquire more closely into its origin, antecedents, and purpose. The first reference to an ephebic organization is found in an inscription containing a decree of the year 335/4,⁹ concerning the ephebi of the second year, who were, of course, enrolled one year before the date of the decree. Many have sought to establish an earlier date for the beginning of the ephebia, but in vain. Forbes has clearly shown that their arguments are not conclusive, and has established the year 335/4 as the correct date for its beginning.¹⁰

The antecedents of this innovation are not difficult to find. Athens, which was once famed for the valor and military

⁵ *Inscriptiones Graecae*, II² 1106, I. 52ff.

⁶ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 147-148.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 150; Walden, *The Universities of Ancient Greece*, p. 16.

⁹ *IG* II² 1156.

¹⁰ Forbes, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-124.

prowess of her citizens, was, in the period preceding 335/4, under the necessity of entrusting her safety to armies composed largely of mercenaries. A large proportion of her citizens showed no interest in maintaining the prestige of Athens in war, and the small number who did enter the armies displayed a painful lack of the training necessary to make efficient soldiers. The pitiful inadequacy of the Athenian fighting machine was clearly demonstrated in the Battle of Chaeronea, in the year 338/7 when Greece "became subject to the hegemony of King Philip."¹¹

Athens was not slow to see the "handwriting on the wall." A few years later, perhaps in 336/5, a law was passed providing for the training of all the young men from eighteen to twenty years of age at state expense.¹² The first purpose of this organization was, no doubt, the creation of a trained citizen army. But it did much more than this. It developed a body of civic-minded young men, with strong bodies, and with high morale. In these more or less incidental benefits is to be sought, I believe, the germ of the long life and widespread influence of the ephebia. If it is true, as some one has said, that no institution can long maintain itself that does not have within it some element of good, certainly the ephebia must have had in it many elements of good to continue, as it did in Athens, for upwards of six centuries, and to spread itself over all Greece and the countries of the Mediterranean world.

CHANGES IN THE EPHEBIA

In the course of its history the ephebia underwent a number of changes. We shall mention but briefly two changes leading up to a third—the reduction of the period of training from two years to one, the development of the ephebia from a military college to a school analogous to our modern universities, and finally the admission of foreigners.

During the government of Antipater the Athenian constitution was changed, so that only those who possessed property to the value of two thousand drachmas had the right to full

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

¹² *Aristot., resp. Ath.*, 42, 4.

citizenship, and consequently the privilege of educating their sons in the ephebic college.¹³ The result was, that, while before 322/1 about 450-500 ephebi were enrolled annually,¹⁴ after these dates the number was reduced by 100 to 300.¹⁵

As long as Demosthenes was alive, to keep the military spirit and patriotic enthusiasm glowing in the breasts of the Athenians, so long did they cherish the institution that provided for the military training of their youth. Soon after his time, however, (ca. 301/0) it was no longer felt necessary for all, or even the sons of citizens of the proper census rating, to be enrolled for military training.¹⁶ In place of conscription a form of voluntary service was inaugurated. All compulsion was removed from enrolment in the ephebia, the course of training was reduced to one year, and instead of assembling at the Piraeus in the barracks as they had been accustomed to do in the first year, and making the rounds of the fortresses on guard duty, as formerly in the second year, the one year was spent in Athens. Nor was the age of eighteen any longer rigidly adhered to for entrance, but we find names of brothers listed in the ephebic inscriptions and at least one reference to a sixteen year old ephebus.¹⁷

These were radical changes. While the ephebia still retained its technical military training, the period of such training was reduced by half. The personnel of the student body, instead of consisting of a democratic group intent upon the serious study of arms for a very practical purpose, was now made up of a limited number of young men from wealthy homes, who had enrolled to complete their education in this very select school. Hence, in the course of time, the military phase of the training gave way, in an increasingly large measure, to literary and philosophical studies. The ephebi attended the lectures of the various philosophers, rhetoricians, and teachers in the city of Athens.¹⁸ Soon instruction in philosophy and rhetoric was incorporated into the course of

¹³ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 152; Ferguson, *Hellenistic Athens*, p. 22.

¹⁶ Ferguson, *op. cit.*, pp. 127-128.

¹⁷ Forbes, *op. cit.*, pp. 152-153.

¹⁸ Walden, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

the ephebic college. Such studies were, however, never engaged in to the exclusion of gymnastic exercises and training in physical education.

Later another factor hastened the change of the ephebia from a military college to a university. When Athens became subject to Rome in 146/5, all necessity for training a body of citizen soldiery was automatically removed.¹⁹ Had the ephebia accomplished but one and only one thing, the training of soldiers for a citizen army, this would certainly have been the fitting place for recording its demise. But arms yielded to the toga, and the ephebia continued on its course four centuries longer.

All these changes made it easier for a final change to be consummated—the admission of foreigners to the benefits of the ephebia. Originally the privilege of enrolment had been carefully restricted to those who could prove, upon examination by their deme, their Athenian parentage, and their age as eighteen years. Penalties were attached to any attempted violation of these requirements.²⁰ Membership in the ephebic corps was a certification both to the legitimacy of an ephebus' birth and to the Athenian citizenship of his parents. Under such conditions, one might with equal propriety conceive the possibility of a French citizen, for example, entering the United States military academy at West Point in our day, as a foreigner entering the ephebia. With the restrictions removed, however, the ephebia became but another one of the many schools which made Athens the Mecca to which the youth of the Mediterranean world resorted for an education.

ATHENS IN THE SECOND CENTURY BEFORE CHRIST

The position of Athens in the second century before Christ and thereafter was unique. Politically the city was unimportant. And yet Macedonian princes and foreign rulers vied with one another in according her honors. Ferguson explains this condition by saying that "Athens was recognized now, no less than in the times of the *diadochoi*, as the cultural center of the world . . .," and he goes on to quote Heracleides

¹⁹ Forbes, *op cit.*, p. 156.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

(ca. 205/4), "In a word . . . Athens surpasses other cities in all that makes for enjoyment and betterment of life by as much as other cities surpass the country."²¹ Throngs of foreign students filled the city. They came to obtain a first-hand acquaintance with Athenian thought and civilization. The schools of philosophy, as the author quoted above says, "became like many other private associations, essentially nests of foreigners."²²

Athens was no longer merely the capital of Attica, but the intellectual capital of the world. Thus it came about that foreigners, in no large numbers at first, are found enrolled in the institution which was originally devoted to the training of Athenian soldiers. Any one was freely admitted to the ephebic college, with the exception that slaves were excluded.²³ The attitude of Athens toward "the stranger within her gates," which was, no doubt, the attitude toward the foreign ephebi, is well expressed by Pericles in the famous Funeral Oration. "We are also superior to our opponents in our system of training for warfare, and this in the following respects. In the first place, we throw our city open to all the world and we never by exclusion-acts debar anyone from learning, or seeing anything which an enemy might profit by observing if it were not kept from his sight."²⁴

INSCRIPTIONS LISTING FOREIGNERS

Our knowledge of the foreigner in the Athenian ephebia rests entirely upon inscriptions engraved upon marble stones, which have come down to us in various states of preservation. The largest and most important of these epigraphical finds was made at Athens in the year 1860.²⁵ The stones have been dated by the archons whose names appear at the head of these inscriptions.

The first ephebic inscription which contains a list of *xenoi* is of the year 119/8 B.C., in which the names of seventeen for-

²¹ Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 215.

²³ Artemidor, *Oneirocr.* I 54, p. 79 (ed. Hercher).

²⁴ Thuc. II 39, Trans. by C. Forster Smith, *The Loeb Classical Library*, Thucydides, Vol. I, p. 325.

²⁵ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

signers are listed after the enumeration of 124 Athenians, making a total of 141 ephebi for that year.²⁶ The last ephebic inscription may be dated A.D. 262/3, or 266/7.²⁷ In it we have recorded the names of 52 foreigners, or more than three times the number in the first, and the combined list of the Athenian ephebi and the mellephebi (those about to be ephebi, youths from 15 to 17 years of age) numbers 313 or over twice the number in the list of 119/8. Judging by these numbers one should not say that at the time of the last inscription the institution was on the road to extinction, but rather, as has been pointed out, "it seems to have enough momentum to carry it on to the year 300 at least."²⁸

Between these dates, 119/8 and 262/3 (or 266/7), a span of 381 (or 385) years, we have a total of 34 inscriptions that show names of foreigners. For a period of 123 years from 39/8 to 84/5 we have no records of any foreigners. There are but three ephebic inscriptions extant from this period—one of the year 13/2, with 65 Athenians and no foreigners;²⁹ another of the year 44/5 or 45/6, containing 102+ names with no indication as to whether they were partly foreigners;³⁰ and a third of the period 40-53 A.D., with 96 names and no indication as to whether they were partly foreigners.³¹ But the very next inscription that has been discovered, to be dated between 84/5 and 92/3, contains the astonishingly large number of 151 *Meilesioi*, together with 80 Athenians.³²

Of the 34 inscriptions in which lists of foreigners occur, ten are either incomplete or fragmentary. Even though they were engraved on marble slabs, the inscriptions have suffered under the hand of time. Many of them were broken, and the fragments, becoming separated, were permanently lost. Some of the stones were, no doubt, used for various purposes

²⁶ Girard, *L'éducation athénienne*, p. 289, said that the oldest inscription listing foreign ephebi was IG II² 1009 (117/8). This was merely an oversight on his part, since IG II² 1008 (119/8) contains a list of foreigners.

²⁷ IG III 1202.

²⁸ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

²⁹ IG III 1076.

³⁰ IG III 1079, (Better edited by Merriam *AJP* 6(1885)5), 1080.

³¹ IG III 1081.

³² IG III 1091.

by the ignorant peasants, and their engraved surfaces became abraded. Defects in the stone, lack of care on the part of the stone cutter, deterioration owing to exposure to the elements are some of the factors accounting for their present condition.

A possible indication of an earlier date for the admission of foreigners into the Athenian ephebia, is seen by some³³ in a decree of the Athenians, which is an expression of thanks on the part of the Athenian people for the many services rendered them by Hippocrates, (460— ca. 359 B.C.), a physician of Cos, in recognition of which the decree goes on to state among other rewards "and that all the youth of Cos be permitted to enjoy ephebic training in Athens even as the Athenian youth."³⁴

Littre says in his edition of Hippocrates, that the document is not genuine, although he considers it ancient. Certainly if the year we have taken as established for the beginning of the ephebia is correct, we must agree with Littre that the decree is spurious, since at the time the decree purports to have been passed the ephebia was non-existent. Furthermore if it was true that the young men of Cos were permitted to attend the ephebia on equal terms with the Athenians, it seems strange that in none of the extant inscriptions do we find any mention of an ephebus from Cos. Since all inscriptions extant of date prior to 39/8 give the ethnic of all foreigners, an ephebus from Cos would be easily recognizable.

TYPES OF EPHEBIC INSCRIPTIONS

Dittenberger recognizes several kinds of inscriptions bearing on ephebi.³⁵ In the first class he places those which record decrees of the Athenian people. These were by far the most important, since they were official documents set up by the order of, and at the expense of, the state. They served a double purpose, that of honoring the ephebi and their officers, especially the *kosmetes*, and that of preserving an official roster of the students of the year. Added to some of the inscriptions are decrees of the Athenians and Salaminians per-

³³ Capes, *University Life in Ancient Athens*, p. 6.

³⁴ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 159, note 2. There was an ephebia in Cos: *Ibid.* p. 205.

³⁵ Dittenberger, *De eph. att.*, p. 2 ff.

taining to certain religious rites in the performance of which the ephebi did well. The Athenian ephebi were listed first by tribes, giving the name, patronymic, and deme of each; then the foreign ephebi, giving name, patronymic, and native country of each. In inscriptions of this class we can be reasonably certain that the names of all foreigners are given, in so far as any foreigners are listed at all. Whether the inscription of 119/8 records the names of the first group of foreigners to enter the ephebia, or whether it is merely the first inscription to list the foreigners must remain a question. One feels that the former alternative is the true statement of what actually took place.

In the second class Dittenberger places inscriptions recording ephebi and gymnasium officers.³⁶ The inscriptions of this class are very numerous and all of them belong to the age of the Roman emperors. They differ from the former class in being unofficial records made by the *kosmetes* or some wealthy ephebus.³⁷ Some steles of this type honor individual ephebi for victory in games both secular and sacred.

In the third group Dittenberger places various smaller inscriptions comprising such as have names of ephebi listed under the statue of the *kosmetes* or *paidotribes*, and tombstone inscriptions of *paidotribai* and of ephebi.

We can now see the probable reason why in inscriptions of the last two types mentioned by Dittenberger, the foreigners might be omitted altogether, or the records concerning them abbreviated. Since the steles were no longer official records, and were not erected at state expense but at the expense of a private individual, economy doubtless dictated the omission or shortening of the record. Accordingly the names of foreigners in all extant inscriptions of the Christian era, beginning with IG III 1091 (84/5-92/3 A.D.) are listed without the ethnic, and in a few cases without the patronymic.

NUMBER OF FOREIGNERS IN ATHENIAN EPHEBIA BY YEARS

Of the large number of young men coming from points outside of Athens to the metropolis of Attica for study, com-

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

³⁷ Dumont, *Essai sur l'éph. att.*, I, p. 100.

paratively few entered the ephebia.³⁸ The institution was, no doubt, a select one in which only the young aristocrats and sons of wealthy business men enrolled. The military character of the ephebic corps, its exclusiveness, its long history, and noble traditions, the pomp and éclat that attended the numerous celebrations in which the ephebi took a prominent part, and to which they lent no small degree of splendor, the universal esteem in which they were held by the Athenians, were, no doubt, strong inducements for enrolment.

From the year 119/8 to 266/7 we have the record of 34 years. During this time the inscriptions show a total of 1,702 foreign ephebi as against 2,816 native Athenians. The number of foreigners varies so widely from year to year that one cannot speak of an average number. A detailed history of the cities and regions from which large numbers of foreign ephebi were wont to come might throw some light upon the great fluctuations in numbers from year to year. We might possibly find some explanation why in an inscription of the period between 83-78 B.C. we find five foreigners and 105 Athenians,³⁹ while in the inscription for 39/8 we have 66 foreigners enrolled in the ephebia and 53 Athenians.⁴⁰ In the year 150/1 seven foreigners enrolled in the ephebia as opposed to 70 Athenians,⁴¹ while eight years later, in 158/9, 109 foreigners had enrolled and the number of Athenians had almost doubled, 106 names being recorded.⁴² The last mentioned list is incomplete, and the numbers may have been larger. The largest number of foreigners ever enrolled was in the year 172/3, with 154 names listed,⁴³ a larger number of foreigners than the number of Athenians in any one year of the period under discussion, with but two exceptions, 117/6 with 162 Athenians,⁴⁴ and the last year for which we have a record, 262/3 or 266/7, with the unusual number of 313 Athenian ephebi (including mellepebi).⁴⁵ An inscription

³⁸ Capes, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-28.

³⁹ *IG* II² 1039.

⁴⁰ *IG* II² 1043.

⁴¹ *IG* III 1120.

⁴² *IG* III 1122.

⁴³ *IG* III 1183.

⁴⁴ *IG* II² 1009.

⁴⁵ *IG* III 1202.

dating between 186/7 and 191/2 shows an equal number of native and foreign ephebi, both numbering 76.⁴⁶ The number of foreigners sometimes drops almost to the vanishing point and one is about to conclude that they have permanently disappeared from the records, only to find, a few years later, the number touching a high water mark. Beloch suggests that the true explanation of these large variations must be sought in the effects of mere chance upon comparatively small numbers.⁴⁷

In general we may say that there were relatively few foreigners in the second century before Christ. Increasing gradually from 39/8, a maximum is reached in the first century of our era. From the years 158/9 to about 200/1 the number of foreigners is relatively high, with an average of roughly 75 for each year. After a little drop the number seems to be increasing in the reign of Philip the Arab, when the record abruptly ceases.⁴⁸

Equally great as the variation between the number of foreigners from year to year is the variation between the proportion of Athenians to foreigners from year to year. In 101/0 we have 102 Athenians as against 36 foreigners.⁴⁹ In a fragmentary list of the period 90-80 B.C. we have the number of foreigners exceeding the number of Athenians for the first time, 14 names of foreigners being listed as compared with only three Athenians.⁵⁰ In an incomplete list falling in the period 83/2 to 78/7 the number of foreigners has dropped to five, while the Athenian ephebi have increased to 105.⁵¹ A little later, in 39/8, the foreigners again outnumber the Athenians, the numbers being 66 to 53,⁵² while the next inscription shows almost two foreigners for every Athenian—151 to 80.⁵³ In nine of the 34 inscriptions the foreigners outnumber the Athenians. See Table A, page 18, for full data on the number of ephebi in each year.

⁴⁶ *IG* III 1145.

⁴⁷ Beloch, *Klio* 6(1906), p. 47.

⁴⁸ Dumont, I, p. 101.

⁴⁹ *IG* II 2 1028.

⁵⁰ *IG* II 2 1031.

⁵¹ *IG* II 2 1039.

⁵² *IG* II 2 1043.

⁵³ *IG* III 1091.

TABLE A

Number of Foreigners in the Athenian Ephebia by Years

Date	Athenians	Foreigners	Reference to IG
119/8	124	17	II ² 1008
117/6	162	12	II ² 1009
107/6	116	24	II ² 1011
101/0	102	36	II ² 1028
90-80	3	14*	II ² 1031
83-78	105	5†	II ² 1039
39/8	53	66	II ² 1043
84/5-92/3	80	151	III 1091
97/8-110/1	60	12+	III 1092
96-117	52	47‡*	III 1093
111/2	21	79	III 1096
115/6	4	48	III 1098
			BCH 38(1914) 422 f.
148/9	ca. 106	4(?)†	III 1114/1116
150/1	70	7	III 1120
155/6	79+	29+†	III 1124
158/9	ca. 106	ca. 109†	III 1122
164/5	143 (aver. of 11 a tribe)	19+†	III 1127
166/7	95	41	III 1128
167/8	27	60	Eph. Arch. (1893) 67ff.
172/3	80	154	III 1133
175/6-177/8	106	109	III 1138
181/2-191/2	60, 65 (?)	37	III 1147
186/7-191/2	76+	76+	III 1145
192/3	85	39	III 1160
ca. 190-200	94	104	III 1163
ca. 200/1	70	61	III 1165
198/9-205/6	76	27	III 1171
200/1-207/8	61	32	III 1169
Before Caracalla	—	113	Eph. Arch. (1893) 95f.
ante 212/3	ca. 60	31+	III 1176
212/3 or soon after	57	38+†	III 1177
			BCH 39(1915) 262
230-235	92+	44+	III 1192
230-235	78	5†	III 1193
262/3 or 266/7	313 ⁵⁴	52	III 1202
Totals: Number of inscriptions, 34			
	2816	1702	

* Fragmentary.

† Incomplete.

‡ No Caption.

⁵⁴ This number includes ephebi and mellephebi.

PROVENIENCE OF FOREIGNERS

That ephebic training had a well-nigh universal appeal becomes evident when we consider the provenience of the foreign students enrolled. While certain regions were more strongly represented than others, ephebi were entered from almost every country of the Mediterranean world and from nearly all the important islands. It is to be regretted that for the great majority of the total of 1,702 foreign students recorded by our extant inscriptions, we do not have the ethnic given. As has been intimated before, the ethnic is omitted in all the known inscriptions of the Christian era. Seven inscriptions of the last two centuries before Christ, 119/8 to 39/8, record the ethnic for 173 students, and it is from these relatively meager sources that we derive our knowledge concerning the provenience of the foreigners in the Athenian ephebia. Even this number is decreased somewhat by the fact that for 28 of these names the ethnic is erased, lost, or wholly undecipherable. In the case of twelve other names it is only partially preserved and we can but make a guess at the probable provenience of some, assuming that the same place occurs in a fully preserved inscription. So *IG II² 1028 K - - - eus* refers, no doubt, either to Carthea (on Ceos) or Coronea (in Boeotia). *A - - -*, *IG II² 1039*, very likely indicates Antioch. Indication of the representation in the Athenian ephebia of two cities not occurring in full in any other inscription is given in *IG II² 1043 l. 102* where *Nic - -* is perhaps to be identified with Nicopolis in Epirus opposite Actium; and *IG II² 1043 ll. 105-108* where *- lou - -* and *- e - - lou - -* correspond with no ethnic occurring elsewhere in the ephebic inscriptions.

From 49 cities⁵⁵ throughout Greece, Northern Greece, the Aegean Islands, Asia Minor, Syria, Phoenicia and Palestine, Africa, and Italy young men came to share in the benefits of the ephebic training at Athens. Table B, pages 21 to 23, will show the provenience by cities and Table C, pages 25 to 27, the regional provenience.

⁵⁵ Including the two cities referred to by the fragmentary ethnics, *Nic - -* and *- lou - -*.

The figures in these tables are interesting. The students from the East—Asia Minor, Syria, the Aegean Islands, Phoenicia and Palestine—constitute a heavily preponderant share. Such cities as Miletus, Antioch, Heraclea Pontica, and Laodicea sent large numbers. The Phoenician cities—Sidon, Berytus, and Tripolis—are well represented with three each. Rome was the only city of the West to send considerable numbers.

ROMAN REPRESENTATION IN THE EPHEBIA

A study of the resumé of the data showing the regional provenience of foreigners on page 27 will readily convince anyone that statements to the effect that the Romans did not appreciate the ephebic college,⁵⁶ and that "the Roman character was still too unimaginative and commonplace to prize the varied attractiveness of life at Athens"⁵⁷ do not represent the true state of affairs. When one considers that Italy, with 21 ephebi, stands second only to Asia Minor in the number of ephebi sent to Athens and that the city of Rome is surpassed only by Miletus in the number of youths sent to Athens for ephebic training, the numbers being respectively 27 and 19; that Antioch, Rome's nearest competitor, shows but 13, while Heraclea Pontica with eight and Laodicea with seven, the two next highest in number, are outnumbered two to one by Romans, we must conclude that the inhabitants of Rome showed as great an interest in the Athenian ephebia as did the inhabitants of the larger cities of Asia Minor. Certainly the strong military character of the ephebia, if nothing else, appealed to the practical Romans.

⁵⁶ Dumont, I, p. 117.

⁵⁷ Capes, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

TABLE B

Towns Represented by Foreigners in the Athenian Ephebia

Place	Region	No. of For.		Date	IG ²	Local Ephebia?
Adramyttium	Mysia	1		108/7	1011	no
Alabanda	Caria	1		39/8	1043	yes
Alexandria	Egypt	1		83-78	1039	yes
Apamea	Phrygia	1		108/7	1011	yes
Antioch	Syria	13		119/8	1008	yes
			3	117/6	1009	
				108/7	1011	
			4	101/0	1028	
			1	39/8	1043	
Aradus	Phoenicia	1		101/0	1028	no
Ascalon	Palestine	1		101/0	1028	no
Berytus	Phoenicia	3	1	119/8	1008	yes
			2	108/7	1011	
Carthea	Ceos	1		108/7	1011	no
Carystus	Euboea	2	1	90-80	1031	yes
			1	39/8	1043	
Cercina	Island off N.Africa	1		119/8	1008	no
Clazomenae	Lydia	1		101/0	1028	no
Coronea	Boeotia	1		83-78	1039	no
Cyrene	Libya	1		101/0	1028	yes
Eretria	Euboea	2	1	90-80	1031	yes
			1	83-78	1039	
			2	119/8	1008	
Heraclea Pontica	Bithynia	8		117/6	1009	yes
			2	108/7	1011	
			1	101/0	1028	
			1	83-78	1039	
			1	39/8	1043	
Julis	Ceos	1		101/0	1028	no
Laodicea	Phrygia	7	3	119/8	1008	no
			1	117/6	1009	
			1	108/7	1011	
			2	101/0	1028	
Mallus	Cilicia	1		117/6	1009	no
Maronea	Thrace	2		101/0	1028	no
Miletus	Caria	27	3	117/6	1009	yes
			2	108/7	1011	
			7	101/0	1028	
			1	90-80	1031	
			14	39/8	1043	
Naples	Campania	2	1	108/7	1011	yes
			1	101/0	1028	

Place	Region	No. of For.	Date	IG ²	Local Ephebia?	
Odessus	Thrace	1	90-80	1031	yes	
Opus	Locris	1	108/7	1011	yes	
Oroanda	Pisidia	1	108/7	1011	no	
Oropus	Attica and Boeotia	1	39/8	1043	no	
Paros	Aegean Island	1	119/8	1008	yes	
Pergamum	Mysia	1	90-80	1031	yes	
Plataea	Boeotia	2	39/8	1043	yes	
Rome	Latium	19	1	119/8	1008	no
			2	117/6	1009	
			5	108/7	1011	
			2	101/0	1028	
			4	90-80	1031	
			5	39/8	1043	
Salamis	Island off Attica	4	2	90-80	1031	no
			2	39/8	1043	
Seleucia	Cilicia	1		90-80	1031	no
Sicyon	Argolis	2	1	119/8	1008	yes
			1	117/6	1009	
Sidon	Phoenicia	3		39/8	1043	no
Sinope	Paphlagonia	1		101/0	1028	no
Smyrna	Lydia	1		108/7	1011	yes
Soli	Cyprus	1		119/8	1008	no
Tanagra	Boeotia	3	1	101/0	1028	no
			2	39/8	1043	
Tarentum	Calabria	1		101/0	1028	no
Tarsus	Cilicia	1		108/7	1011	no
Temnus	Mysia	1		90-80	1031	no
Tenedos	Aegean Island	1		101/0	1028	no
Termessus	Pisidia	1		101/0	1028	yes
Thebes	Boeotia	1		90-80	1031	yes
Thespiae	Boeotia	1		119/8	1008	yes
Tripolis	Phoenicia	3	2	101/0	1028	no
			1	39/8	1043	
Tyana	Cappadocia	1		39/8	1043	no
Ethnic lost, erased, or wholly undecipherable		28	2	119/8	1008	
			2	117/6	1009	
			3	101/0	1028	
			1	83-78	1039	
			20	39/8	1043	
Ethnic only partially preserved		12				
	Antioch (?)		1	83-78	1039	
	Carthea or					
	Coronea (?)		2	101/0	1028	
	Miletus (?)		2	39/8	1043	

Place	Region	No. of For.	Date	IG ²	Local Ephebia?
	Nicopolis (?) ⁵⁸	1	39/8	1043	yes
	Sicyon, Sidon, or Clazomenae (?)	1	39/8	1043	
	A city not occurring elsewhere in the entire list	2	39/8	1043	
	Fragment is not suggestive of any city	3	39/8	1043	
Places represented	49				
Foreign ephebi with decipherable ethnic				138	
Foreign ephebi with undecipherable ethnic				40	
Total foreign ephebi of both classes				173	

Do the names of the ephebi from Rome represent individuals of true Roman stock or young men of foreign extraction whose family had adopted a Roman name? A number of considerations seem to indicate that the former alternative is the true one. In the first place there seems to be no good reason to disbelieve that native Romans of good family enrolled in the ephebia at Athens. The school was a select one, patronized by young men of wealth and standing. Romans were often numbered among the students of famous teachers in the East. Among other well-known examples, Cicero and Caesar may be mentioned. Indeed we should not be wrong in saying that the practice of going to the East for purposes of study was as usual among the Romans of this period as the practice of going abroad for advanced study is among Americans today.

With one exception the names as well as the patronymics of the ephebi from Rome are true Latin names. Lucius, Marcus, Terentius, Decimus, Gaius, Publius, Tiberius, Aulus, Granius, and Valerius occur. It is true we find these names in other lists of Athenians and foreigners, but never, as here, do we find both name and patronymic of genuine Latin origin. Rather we meet with combinations made up of a Roman and a Greek or *vice versa*, as, for example, Marcus (son of) Zosimus, Valerius (son of) Epaphus, Claudius (son of) Eutyclus.

⁵⁸ Nicopolis is represented by foreigners in the Delian ephebia together with many places that are listed here.

The names of the ephebi from Naples and Tarentum, on the contrary, clearly reveal Greek origin. They are: Dionysius (son of) Diphilus,⁵⁹ Isidorus (son of) Isidorus,⁶⁰ Simalus (son of) Simalus.⁶¹

Another indication that these young men were of true Italic stock is to be seen in the fact that in the cases of two individuals two names are given in addition to the patronymic, thus: Lucius Valerius (son of) Aulus of Rome;⁶² Publius Granus (son of) Publius of Rome.⁶³ In another, the patronymic is not given but two names designate the individual—Marcus Terentius of Rome.⁶⁴ The practice of using two names, common to all Italic races, is contrary to the custom of all other Aryan races, who use but one name.⁶⁵

The one exception mentioned above is the name Androtimus (son of) Lucius of Rome,⁶⁶ in which the combination of the given name with its Greek appearance and the undoubtedly Roman patronymic seems to point to what later became common, the assumption of a Latin name by a foreigner to hide slave or non-Roman ancestry.

The custom of Romanizing names became very common under the empire.⁶⁷ To bear a Roman name was to share in the prestige and glory that was Rome's. It added to one's influence, and was a protection from possible injury. Many inhabitants of the Mediterranean world, upon purchasing or otherwise acquiring Roman citizenship, prefixed to their names the name of the emperor under whom they had obtained their citizenship.⁶⁸ This resulted in the weakening of the gentile name. Often these names were abbreviated thus: Ael. for Aelius, Aur. for Aurelius, Cl. for Claudius, Fl. for Flavius. We find entire ephebic lists in which each name has Aur. or Cl. prefixed.

⁵⁹ IG II² 1028.

⁶⁰ IG II² 1011.

⁶¹ IG II² 1028.

⁶² IG II² 1009.

⁶³ IG II² 1043.

⁶⁴ IG II² 1043.

⁶⁵ Solmsen, *Indogermanische Eigennamen als Spiegel der Kulturgeschichte*, p. 136.

⁶⁶ IG II² 1011.

⁶⁷ Frank, *An Economic History of Rome*, pp. 208-209, 212-213.

⁶⁸ Solmsen, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

TABLE C

Regional Provenience of the Foreigners in the Athenian Ephebia

GREECE PROPER				IG ²	
Coronea	Boeotia	1		83-78	1039
Opus	Locris	1		107/6	1011
Oropus	Attica or Boeotia	1		39/8	1043
Plataea	Boeotia	2		39/8	1043
Salamis	Island off Attica	4	2	90-80	1031
			2	39/8	1043
Sicyon	Argolis	2		117/6	1009
Tanagra	Boeotia	3	1	101/0	1028
			2	39/8	1043
Thebes	Boeotia	1		90-80	1031
Thespiae	Boeotia	1		119/8	1008
NORTHERN GREECE					
Maronea	Thrace	2		101/0	1028
Odessus	Thrace	1		90-80	1031
AEGEAN ISLANDS					
Carthea	Ceos	1		108/7	1011
Carystus	Euboea	2	1	90-80	1031
			1	39/8	1043
Eretria	Euboea	2	1	90-80	1031
			1	83-78	1039
Julis	Ceos	1		101/0	1028
Paros		1		119-8	1008
Tenedos		1		101/0	1028
ASIA MINOR					
Adramyttium	Mysia	1		108/7	1011
Alabanda	Caria	1		39/8	1043
Apamea	Phrygia	1		108/7	1011
Clazomenae	Lydia	1		101/0	1028
Heraclea Pontica		8	2	119/8	1008
			1	117/6	1009
			2	108/7	1011
			1	101/0	1028
			1	83-78	1039
			1	39/8	1043
Laodicea	Phrygia	7	3	119/8	1008
			1	117/6	1009
			1	108/7	1011
			2	101/0	1028
Mallus	Cilicia	1		117/6	1009
Miletus	Caria	27	3	117/6	1009
			2	108/7	1011
			7	101/0	1028

			1	90-80	1031
			14	39/8	1043
Oroanda	Pisidia	1		108/7	1011
Pergamum	Mysia	1		90-80	1031
Seleucia	Cilicia	1		90-80	1031
Sinope	Paphlagonia	1		101/0	1028
Smyrna	Lydia	1		108/7	1011
Soli	Cyprus	1		119/8	1008
Tarsus	Cilicia	1		108/7	1011
Temnus	Mysia	1		90-80	1031
Termessus	Pisidia	1		101/0	1028
Tyana	Cappadocia	1		39/8	1043
SYRIA					
Antioch	Seleucis	13	3	119/8	1008
			1	117/6	1009
			3	108/7	1011
			4	101/0	1028
			2	39/8	1043
PHOENICIA AND PALESTINE					
Tripolis	Phoenicia	3		101/0	1028
Sidon	Phoenicia	2		39/8	1043
Ascalon	Palestine	1		101/0	1028
Aradus	Phoenicia	1		101/0	1028
Berytus	Phoenicia	3	1	119/8	1008
			2	108/7	1011
AFRICA					
Alexandria	Egypt	1		83-78	1039
Cercina	Island off N. Africa	1		119/8	1008
Cyrene	Libya	1		101/0	1029
ITALY					
Naples	Campania	2	1	101/0	1028
			1	108/7	1011
Rome	Latium	19	1	119/8	1008
			2	117/6	1009
			5	108/7	1011
			2	101/0	1028
			4	90-80	1031
			5	39/8	1043
Tarentum	Calabria	1		101/0	1028

Resumé

	No. of Cities	No. of Ephebi
Greece Proper.....	9	16
Northern Greece.....	2	3
Aegean Islands.....	6	8
Asia Minor.....	18	57
Syria.....	1	13
Phoenicia and Palestine.....	5	11
Africa.....	3	3
Italy.....	3	22
Undecipherable.....	40
Grand Totals.....	47	173
Total number of ephebi from cities having a local ephebia.....		74
Total number of ephebi from cities not having a local ephebia.....		59
Total.....		133

These conditions obtained under the empire. It is not likely that a Roman name was as eagerly sought after, and as highly prized under the late republic, the period in which the inscriptions containing the names of ephebi from Rome occur, 119-39 B.C. In a period marked by unrest, civil strife, and foreign wars, when even Romans despaired of the future of the state,⁶⁹ it is not probable that non-Romans were moved to drop their native names and assume others of the Roman type.

Another way of viewing our data shows that eighteen cities of Asia Minor sent an average of three plus ephebi, five cities of Phoenicia and Palestine, an average of two plus, nine cities of Greece proper an average of two minus. Compared with these, three cities of Italy sent an average of seven plus ephebi each.

Our data show, too, that Dumont's old classification of foreign ephebi into three groups, viz., those coming from Greece proper, those of Asiatic origin, and those from Northern Greece and Thrace needs revision.⁷⁰ Certainly Italy deserves a place as one of the major divisions, while Northern Greece and Thrace, which sent a total of only three ephebi from two cities might well give way to any regional division mentioned

⁶⁹ Hor., *Epo.*, 16, 1-22.

⁷⁰ Dumont, I, p. 110.

in our table, since it sent the fewest of any of them. Furthermore, the statement that the ephebi from Greece proper are rarest because the institution of the ephebia was strongest there is not borne out by the facts.⁷¹ Greece proper (including Salamis) stands third among the regional divisions with 20 ephebi. Dumont's assertion that Thespieae of Boeotia is strongly represented in the Athenian ephebia is without basis in fact. The inscriptions show but one ephebus from Thespieae.⁷² He adduces as a factor making for the strong representation claimed for Thespieae the desire awakened in young men for athletic training owing to the games that the city provided for them. As a matter of actual fact, not only did Thespieae provide games for her young men but also an ephebic organization fulfilling, as far as we can judge, the same functions as that at Athens.⁷³

Perhaps this is the appropriate place to correct an inaccuracy of statement on the part of W. W. Capes. He writes, "In the second century of our era (*sic*) when more than 100 strangers sometimes matriculated in the same year, only two or three Roman names occur, while the great towns of Asia Minor and the isles of the Aegean are constantly appearing."⁷⁴ We have previously noted that all inscriptions of the Christian era without exception fail to give the ethnic in listing the names of foreign ephebi. Since, as Capes himself says a few lines farther on, the foreigners usually disguised their names in a Greek dress, no clue as to their provenience can be gathered from the name itself. We can make no statement concerning the provenience of the foreigners in the Christian era other than one dealing in probabilities, and based upon the data furnished us by the inscriptions before Christ.

IDENTIFICATION OF THE ETHNIC OF HOMONYMOUS CITIES

In some cases there are two or more towns with the same ethnic. While it is extremely difficult, and sometimes impossible, to arrive at an absolute identification of the town

⁷¹ Dumont, I, p. 110.

⁷² *IG* II² 1008.

⁷³ *IG* VII 1748, 1749.

⁷⁴ Capes, *op cit*, p. 27.

meant, certain considerations may lead to a probable identification. A city of some size and importance during the period in question will, all other things being equal, be the place of provenience of an ephebus, rather than a small and unimportant town which chances to be homonymous. A town located in a region from which we have, by undisputed testimony, a number of ephebi recorded will, with more probability, be the correct one, than one located in a district sending no ephebi. I shall attempt to show below that a number of cities sending ephebi to Athens had political and social ties bringing them into a relationship more or less close with Athens. Where such relationship can be shown to exist, there is a strong probability of identity with the uncertain ethnic of the inscription. Cities which provided physical training and games, and were equipped with gymnasia, were much more likely to send ephebi to Athens than those that showed no interest in gymnastic exercises. With these considerations in mind we shall proceed to examine the cities that present uncertainties.

Apamea on the Orontes and the city of the same name with the appellative, Cibotos, in Phrygia, were both large and important cities. Both seem to have had an ephebic organization. A decision between them is difficult. The latter is chosen as being more probably the city meant, because it seems to have been a city of great commercial importance, being placed second only to Ephesus in Asia Minor.⁷⁵ Its flourishing condition even in Roman times is mentioned by one writer.⁷⁶

The ethnic *Aradios* without doubt refers to Aradus in Phoenicia. It was next in population after Tyre and Sidon and had an extensive trade. It was at the height of its development toward the close of the era of Seleucidae.⁷⁷ It had no ephebic organization.

Cercina, a small double island off the Syrtes Minor on the coast of Africa, seems to have no connection with Cercine in

⁷⁵ Strabo, XII, p. 576 Cas.

⁷⁶ Dio Chrysost., *Oratio* XXXV (ed. Dindorf).

⁷⁷ Strabo, XVI, p. 754 Cas.

Macedonia, which is characterized as an "uninhabited mountain chain."⁷⁸ Cercina was colonized by the Locrians.⁷⁹

Corone, Messenia, and Coronea, Boeotia have the same ethnic. Coronea in Boeotia seems to have had no ephebic organization. There is a record of only two ephebi from Greece south of the Corinthian gulf, both from Sicyon.⁸⁰ On the other hand there are a number from Boeotia. Coronea was the native city of the founder of Corone in Messenia, Epimelides. We decide for Coronea in Boeotia.

In support of Laodicea on the Lycus, as opposed to the eight or nine other cities of the same name, can be adduced the fact that at the time of Cicero and Strabo it was known as a very flourishing city and one of the most important in Asia Minor.⁸¹ It was located on the principal highway from Ephesus to the East.⁸² We may infer from the title *gymnasiarch* which occurs in a Laodicean inscription that it had a gymnasium.⁸³

Salamis, the city on the eastern coast of Cyprus, and Salamis, the island off the western coast of Attica, have the same ethnic. Opposed to the identification of the Salamis of the ethnic occurring in the inscription with the former, is the fact that when it is referred to elsewhere in inscriptions the qualifying phrase is added "of Cyprus," which is here lacking.⁸⁴ Salamis, the island, had a varied history. After being adjudged to Athens in the celebrated dispute between Athens and Megara, in which both parties had recourse to the Iliad in seeking to justify their claims, Salamis became an Attic deme until the time of the Macedonian supremacy.⁸⁵ In 232 B.C. the island was purchased by Athens, the Salaminians expelled and the land divided among Athenian cleruchies.⁸⁶ Salamis continued, no doubt, "to be a dependency of Athens

⁷⁸ Thuc., II, 98; Ptol., III, 13, 19.

⁷⁹ Oldfather, art. *Cercina*, Pauly-Wissowa, Supplementbd. IV 214.

⁸⁰ IG II 2 1008, 1009.

⁸¹ Cic., *ad Fam.*, III, 5, 4; *ibid.*, XV, 4, 2; *ad Att.*, V, 21, 9; Strabo, XII, pp. 576, 578 Cas.

⁸² Strabo, XIV, p. 663 Cas.

⁸³ CIG 3945.

⁸⁴ IG III 2188; IG II 3. 3295.

⁸⁵ Plut., *Sol.*, 10; Strabo, IX, p. 394 Cas.

⁸⁶ Plut., *Arat.*, 34; Paus., II, 8, 6; Boeckh, CIG I, p. 148 ff.

like Aegina and Oropus, since the grammarians never call it deme, which it had been originally, but generally a *polis*.”⁸⁷

Seleucia in Cilicia, Seleucia in Pieria, and Seleucia on the Tigris have the same ethnic. An ephebus came from the neighboring city of Tarsus about the same time that we have one recorded from Seleucia in Cilicia, (90-80 B.C.).⁸⁸ Seleucia in Cilicia had a gymnasium, and Seleucia on the Tigris an ephebic college.⁸⁹ Although a decision is difficult we are inclined to favor Seleucia in Cilicia.

Soli in Cilicia and Soli, town on the coast of Cyprus, have the same ethnic. Soli on Cyprus is persistently associated with Athens in the stories of its founding. According to Plutarch it was named after Solon.⁹⁰ Other accounts make it an Athenian settlement under Phalerus and Acamus, or of Demophon and Theseus.⁹¹

Tripolis in Phrygia and Tripolis in Phoenicia, have the same ethnic. Little is known of Tripolis in Phrygia. By some ancient writers it is reckoned a town of Caria, by others a town of Lydia.⁹² On the other hand Tripolis in Phoenicia was a well-known and important city, situated on the sea, a little to the south of Aradus. It was founded by the three most important Phoenician cities, Tyre, Sidon, and Aradus, to be a rallying place for their confederation. It was a busy commercial city and sea-port.⁹³ It is, no doubt, the city from which the three ephebi came in 101/0.

Following Dumont, I accept without discussion, Antioch in Syria and the Pontic Heraclea as the cities referred to in the inscriptions by the ethnics for Antioch and Heraclea respectively.⁹⁴

It is, of course, possible, but not probable, in all cases where there are cities of the same name, that the ephebi whose names we meet with in the inscriptions belonged to different ones of the homonymous cities. Both or all the

⁸⁷ Smith, *Dict. of Geogr.*, art. Salamis, cf. Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 151; von Schoeffer, Pauly-Wissowa, art. Salamis.

⁸⁸ IG II² 1011.

⁸⁹ *Denkschr. Wien. Ak. phil.-hist. Kl.*, 44 (1896), 6. Abh., p. 102, n. 181. Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos* xxiv.

⁹⁰ Plut., *Sol.*, 26.

⁹¹ Smith, *Dict. of Geogr.*, art. Soli.

⁹² Ptol., V, 2, 18; Steph. Byz., p. 667; Pliny, *N. H.* V, 29, 30.

⁹³ Diod., XVI, 41; Strabo, XVI, p. 754 Cas.

⁹⁴ Dumont, I, p. 115.

cities of the same name may have been represented. One would expect, however, in that event, that the places would be differentiated.

In reading the history of the cities sending young men to the Athenian ephebia, one cannot help but notice the fact that Athenian influence has been a factor in their existence.

Adramyttium is said to have been founded by Adramys, a brother of Croesus, king of Lydia. Subsequently, however, a colony of Athenians settled there.⁹⁵ When the Athenians removed some of the inhabitants of Delos from the island in 422 B.C. a group of these Delians came to Adramyttium, thus strengthening the Athenian element.⁹⁶

The fortunes of the cities of Euboea were influenced by Athens owing to their proximity to that city. The soldiers of Carystus and of Athens learned to know one another both as foes and allies.⁹⁷ The Eretrians were represented as Ionians.⁹⁸

After being a dependency of Athens for some years, the Ionian city of Clazomenae was induced to revolt (412 B.C.) together with Sicily. In a very short time the rebellion was subdued and Clazomenae again entered into alliance with Athens.⁹⁹

Strabo calls Heraclea Pontica a colony of Miletus.¹⁰⁰ The relations of Miletus with Athens were close and her representation in the ephebia strong. While Strabo is, doubtless, in error in thinking Heraclea Pontica a Milesian colony, the Ionian influence of the many colonies of Miletus along the Euxine Sea cannot have left Heraclea unaffected.¹⁰¹ Heraclea Pontica was rather a Boeotian colony, settled in part by colonists from Tanagra. It is a significant fact that Tanagra in Boeotia is represented by three ephebi,¹⁰² one more than the number sent by Plataea, which is known to have been intimately associated with Athens for many years. Heraclea

⁹⁵ Thuc., V, 1.

⁹⁶ Thuc., VIII, 108.

⁹⁷ Hdt., IX, 105; Diod., XVIII, 11; Thuc., I, 98.

⁹⁸ Hdt., VIII, 46.

⁹⁹ Thuc., VIII, 14, 23.

¹⁰⁰ Strabo, XII, p. 542 Cas.

¹⁰¹ Rüge, art. Heraclea, Pauly-Wissowa, VIII, 433.

¹⁰² IG II² 1028, 1043.

Pontica with eight ephebi is surpassed in number of ephebi sent to Athens only by Miletus, Rome, Antioch, and Laodicea.

Miletus is par excellence an example of the effect of political and racial connection with Athens upon representation in the Athenian ephebi. Grote calls it "an important city, the first among the continental allies of Athens."¹⁰³ Athens figures prominently in its history. Under the Athenian leadership of Nileus and his associates, an Ionian army, with a large number of Athenians, "from the very town hall of Athens" came to Miletus.¹⁰⁴ After slaying the parents and husbands they married the Carian women resident there. They greatly enlarged the city and made Miletus the most important Ionian colony.¹⁰⁵ Herodotus gives us two criteria for recognizing true Ionians—their city should derive its origin from Athens, and they should celebrate the solemnity of Apaturia.¹⁰⁶ While his statement must not be taken too literally, nor pressed too closely, we are certainly justified in assuming from it that Ionian cities stood in closer relationship to one another and to Athens and would in all likelihood have stronger feelings of affinity for Athens than if they were not Ionian cities.

Upwards of 75 colonies, perhaps more, on the Euxine Sea, in Thrace, and elsewhere, called Miletus their mother city.¹⁰⁷ Some of them, as for example Sinope and Odessus, are represented by names in the roster of foreigners in the Athenian ephebia.¹⁰⁸ Miletus itself holds the record for the number of young men enrolled in the Athenian ephebic college—a total of 27. In one year, 39/8, it sent 14, but five less than the total enrolment throughout the entire history of the ephebia of its nearest competitor, Rome, with 19.¹⁰⁹ Of the total of 133 foreign ephebi whose provenience is known, Miletus sent roughly one-fifth. Together with her colonies she represents almost one-fourth of the foreign ephebi. That a still larger proportion of ephebi came from Miletus in the succeeding

¹⁰³ Grote, *History of Greece*, Vol. VII, p. 375 (N. Y. 1861).

¹⁰⁴ Hdt., I, 146.

¹⁰⁵ Apollod., III, 1; Eustath., *ad Dionys.*, V, 825; Paus., VII, 2, 3.

¹⁰⁶ Hdt., I, 147.

¹⁰⁷ Pliny, *N. H.* V, 81; Sen., *Cons. ad Helv.*, 6; Strabo, XIV, p. 685 Cas.

¹⁰⁸ *IG* II² 1028, 1031, 1043.

¹⁰⁹ *IG* II² 1043.

years is indicated by the fact that the next three extant inscriptions after the year 39/8, in which the phenomenally large number of 14 had enrolled, call the foreigners collectively, no longer foreigners but Milesians.¹¹⁰ Can it be that the ephebi from Miletus together with those from its colonies constituting a preponderant share of the foreign enrolment gave the name Milesians to the entire group of foreigners? We shall return to this question again, in speaking of the explanations of this term that have been advanced.

According to Strabo's account, Naples was a Cumaeon colony, but later received an additional body of Chalcidic and Athenian colonists.¹¹¹ It was one of the firm upholders of Greek culture on the Italian peninsula. For many years it remained the seat of all that was Greek in literature, art, and tradition.¹¹² Tacitus calls it *Graeca urbs*.¹¹³

Oropus, originally a Boeotian city, was later taken by Athens but was bandied about for many years until it finally remained in the possession of Athens.¹¹⁴ It does not, however, seem to have been incorporated as an Athenian deme.¹¹⁵

Paros was colonized at an early period by Ionians.¹¹⁶ It later became subject to Athens.¹¹⁷

Of all the Boeotian cities none had closer relations with Athens than Plataea. Since it could not abide the hegemony of Thebes, and was unable to stand out against the powerful city alone, it formed a close alliance with Athens,¹¹⁸ to which city it continued faithful during the whole of its subsequent history.¹¹⁹

According to a story that Pausanias gives us, the name of Sicyon was derived from an Athenian of that name who became king of the city.¹²⁰ This legend seems to indicate Ionian influence in Sicyon.

¹¹⁰ *IG* II² 1091, 1096, 1098.

¹¹¹ Strabo, V, p. 246 Cas.

¹¹² Vell. Pat. I, 4; Varro, *L. L.*, VI, 15.

¹¹³ Tac., *Ann.*, XV, 13.

¹¹⁴ Paus., I, 1; Hdt., V, 77; *ibid.*, VI, 100; Thuc., II, 23; *ibid.*, III, 91; *ibid.*, IV, 96.

¹¹⁵ Xen., *Hell.*, VII, 41.

¹¹⁶ Thuc., IV, 104.

¹¹⁷ Strabo, X, p. 481 Cas.

¹¹⁸ Hdt., VI, 108.

¹¹⁹ Thuc., III, 68.

¹²⁰ Paus., II, 6, 5.

We have referred to Sinope before as a colony of Miletus. About the beginning of the Peloponnesian war the inhabitants of Sinope received aid against their tyrant, Timesileos, from Athens. After the expulsion of the tyrant 600 Athenian colonists were sent to Sinope.¹²¹

The island Tenedos was on the side of Athens during the Peloponnesian war.¹²² Because of its fidelity to Athens the Lacedaemonians ravaged the island.¹²³ Although it was given to Persia in the Peace of Antalcidas it maintained a strong connection with Athens.¹²⁴ The Athenians on their part were favorably inclined towards the inhabitants of Tenedos.¹²⁵

Thus we see that in the case of 16 of the 49 cities and islands represented in the Athenian ephebia there was some tie, slight in some cases, it is true, yet none the less existent, that bound them to Athens. The ephebi from these places total 58, almost one-half of the total of those whose native city can be determined. It may be objected that the slight relation to Athens shown to exist on the part of these various places can hardly be taken as the reason for the presence of foreign ephebi from these cities in the Athenian ephebia. We should certainly not insist upon this as the only factor influencing young men to come to Athens, but when we consider how political and racial influences operate in determining to which foreign university a Canadian student, let us say, would go, we must count it a large factor. Especially must this factor of relationship have been a strong one in cases in which the prospective ephebus traced his ancestral line back to Athens. Certainly, we should say, then, that while most of the ephebi from these cities might have entered the Athenian ephebia without such relationship existing, it was, nevertheless, a strong deciding factor in causing them to come to Athens.

PLACES HAVING A LOCAL EPHEBIA

Athens was by no means the only city to have an ephebic

¹²¹ Plut., *Pericles*, 20.

¹²² Thuc., VII, 57; *ibid.*, II, 2.

¹²³ Xen., *Hell.*, V, 1, 6.

¹²⁴ Demosth., *c. Polybl.*, p. 1223, 53 ff.

¹²⁵ Demosth., *c. Theocr.*, pp. 1333-5.

organization. The ephebia was a widespread institution. From the fourth century before Christ to the third century of our era, the ephebia was found in all regions of the Greek world. See the alphabetical list in the Appendix. In general, the organization, management, and development of these institutions were very similar to those of the ephebic college at Athens.¹²⁶ The ephebia at Alexandria¹²⁷ seems, however, to have been widely different from that at Athens.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find young men in the Athenian ephebia from cities which at one time had an ephebic organization of their own. A total of 74 ephebi whose names we find on the roster of the Athenian ephebia came (1) from cities that at the time of their enrolment had an ephebia, (2) from cities that had had an organization previous to their enrolment and as far as we can learn did not then have one, and (3) from cities that later provided ephebic training for their youth. Twenty-two of the 49 cities represented in the ephebic inscriptions had an ephebia of their own. The documents attesting local ephebic colleges in Alabanda, Berytus, Heraclea Pontica, Opus (Locris), and Termessus give us little clue as to the years during which such an organization was existent.

The year in which an ephebus from these cities entered the ephebia at Athens may possibly be taken as the *terminus ante quem* for the organization of a local ephebia, since we should not ordinarily expect a young man to go abroad to receive ephebic training, when similar training was being offered in his home city. But the fact that we do find this very thing occurring, not once but several times, bids us be wary in adopting this method of dating. Table D on pages 38 and 39 gives a list of the cities which sent young men to the Athenian ephebia, although they had an ephebia of their own.

A comparison of the years in which the foreign ephebus enrolled in the college at Athens with the date for the foreign ephebia will show that Alexandria had an ephebic organization during the years 83-78 B.C. when she sent an ephebus

¹²⁶ J. Oehler, art. *ephebia*, Pauly-Wissowa, V, 2741-2743.

¹²⁷ Cf. *PTeb.*, II 316.

to Athens,¹²⁸ and for many years after. The fact that the ephebia at Alexandria was so different from the ephebia at Athens, as we have mentioned above, may have caused this young man to go to Athens. Eretria (on Euboea) and Thebes seem to have organized ephebic colleges at about the same period as Athens. According to Plutarch, Sicyon had an ephebic organization at the time of the death of Aratus (213/2).¹²⁹ Pausanias (latter half of the second century of our era) notices the fact that ephebi were taught in the gymnasium there. Without doubt an ephebia existed in Sicyon in 108/7 when a youth from that place appears in the list of foreigners at Athens.

¹²⁸ *IG* II² 1039.

¹²⁹ Plut., *Arat.*, 34.

TABLE D
Places Having a Local Ephebia

Place	No. of Eph.	IG II ²	Date of IG	Date of documents attesting local ephebia
Alabanda	1	1043	39/8	no date ¹³⁰
Alexandria	1	1039	83-78	88-80 B.C. ¹³¹ 41 A.D. ¹³² 99 A.D. ¹³³ s. 1/2 A.D. ¹³⁴ 140 A.D. ¹³⁵
Apamea	1	1011	108/7	155 A.D. ¹³⁶ ca. 155 A.D. ¹³⁷
Antioch	13	1008 1009 1011 1028 1043	119/8 117/6 108/7 101/0 39/8	ca. 70 B.C. ¹³⁸
Berytus	3	1008 1011	119/8 108/7	no date ¹³⁹
Carystus	2	1031 1043	90-80 39/8	s. 2 A.D. ¹⁴⁰
Cyrene	1	1028	101/0	35 B.C. ¹⁴¹ 224 A.D. ¹⁴²
Eretria	2	1031 1039	90-80 83-78	322-309 B.C. ¹⁴³ s. 4 B.C. ¹⁴⁴ early s. 3 B.C. ¹⁴⁵ s. 3 B.C. ¹⁴⁶ s. 2 B.C. ¹⁴⁷ s. 1 B.C. ¹⁴⁸

¹³⁰ *BCH* 18(1894) 84, no. 2.

¹³¹ *Sammelb.* 1569 (cf. Preisigke *RE* XI 1493).

¹³² *PLond.* 1912 (Bell, *Jews and Christians in Egypt*).

¹³³ *PTeb.* II 316; *IG Rom.* I 1074.

¹³⁴ *PSI* VII 777.

¹³⁵ *Journ. Egypt. Arch.* 12(1926) 246.

¹³⁶ *IG Rom.* IV 788.

¹³⁷ *REG* 2(1889) 30, n. 6b.

¹³⁸ Julian *Misop.* 358 A ff.; Plut. *Pomp.* 40; Plut. *Cato Min.* 13.

¹³⁹ *Rev. Arch.* II 33(1877 I) 61, n. 9.

¹⁴⁰ *IG XII* 9. 20.

¹⁴¹ Michel, *Recueil*, etc., 644.

¹⁴² *REG* 41(1928) 387.

¹⁴³ *IG XII* 9. 191 A.

¹⁴⁴ *IG XII* 9. 240.

¹⁴⁵ *Arch. dell.* 1915, 169 ff. n. 10.

¹⁴⁶ *IG XII* 9. 249b.

¹⁴⁷ *IG XII* 9. 239.

¹⁴⁸ *IG XII* 9. 235; *IG XII* 9. 234.

Place	No. of Eph.	IG II ²	Date of IG	Date of documents attesting local ephebia
Heraclea Pontica	8	1008	119/8	no date ¹⁴⁹
		1009	117/6	
		1011	108/7	
		1039	83-78	
		1043	39/8	
Miletus	27	1009	117/6	262-260 B.C. ¹⁵⁰ ca. 130 B.C. ¹⁵¹
		1011	108/7	
		1028	101/0	
		1031	90-80	
		1043	39/8	
Naples	2	1011	108/7	ca. s. 1 A.D. ¹⁵²
		1028	101/0	
Odessus	1	1031	90-80	238 A.D. ¹⁵³
Opus	1	1011	108/7	no date ¹⁵⁴
Paros	1	1008	119/8	ca. s. 1 B.C. ¹⁵⁵
Pergamum	1	1031	90-80	147 B.C. ¹⁵⁶
				138-133 B.C. ¹⁵⁷
				Roman time ¹⁵⁸
				Age of Hadrian ¹⁵⁹
Sicyon	2	1008	119/8	Reign of Attalus III ¹⁶⁰ 271-213 B.C. ¹⁶¹
		1009	117/6	
		1011	108/7	
Smyrna	1	1011	108/7	s. 1 A.D. ¹⁶²
Termessus	1	1028	101/0	no date ¹⁶³
Thebes	1	1031	90-80	s. 4 B.C. ¹⁶⁴
Thespieae	1	1008	119/8	Roman Age
				first part of
				s. 3 B.C. ¹⁶⁵
				s. 2 B.C. ¹⁶⁶

¹⁴⁹ *BCH* 22 (1898) 493 f. n. 2; *SB Berlin Ak.* (1888 II), 884, n. 84.

¹⁵⁰ *Milet* I 3 (1914) n. 139.

¹⁵¹ *Milet* I 7 (1924) n. 203.

¹⁵² Strabo, V, p. 246 Cas. cf. Jüthner, Pauly-Wissowa V, 2737.

¹⁵³ *Eev. Arch.* II 35 (1878 I) 114-115, n. 6a.

¹⁵⁴ *IG IX* 1. 285 (?).

¹⁵⁵ *IG XII* 5. 145, 173, 232, 290.

¹⁵⁶ *Ath. Mitt.* 29 (1904) 171 ff.

¹⁵⁷ *Ath. Mitt.* 29 (1904) 152 ff. n. 1.

¹⁵⁸ *Ath. Mitt.* 32 (1907) 279 ff. n. 11; *ibid.* 274 ff.

¹⁵⁹ *Inscr. Perg.* 486 B.

¹⁶⁰ *Inscr. Perg.* 246, 35.

¹⁶¹ Paus. II 10; Plut. *Arat.* 53.

¹⁶² *CIG* 3185, 3326; Cic. *Pro Flacco* 31, 75.

¹⁶³ Lanckoronski II 197, n. 7.

¹⁶⁴ *IG VII* 2442. cf. 2429-2445.

¹⁶⁵ *IG VII* 1748, 1749, 1750.

¹⁶⁶ *IG VII* 1756, 1757.

Pergamum had a strong ephebic college which extended, as far as we can learn, from 147/6 to the Age of Hadrian, if not for a longer period. Foreigners from the surrounding country enrolled in her school. It filled the same need for the immediate localities around it, that the Athenian ephebia filled for the countries surrounding the Mediterranean. It must have been in a flourishing condition when the lone individual from Pergamum, having for some unknown reason, perhaps mere personal whim, deserted the school of his native city, enrolled in the Athenian ephebia (90-80 B.C.).¹⁶⁷

Apamea, Cyrene, Carystus (Euboea), Odessus, Paros, Thespieae, Naples, and Sicyon seem to have been without an ephebic organization at the time of the enrolment of their sons in the Athenian ephebia, but to have organized one later, no doubt largely under the influence of Athens.

There remains to be considered that interesting class of places in which there are evidences of the early formation of an ephebia, but no evidence of the existence of such an institution at the time of enrolment of an ephebus from them at Athens, nor later in their history.

Thespieae in Boeotia may be an example of this class. We have record of an ephebia there, roughly from the third to the second century before Christ. It was probably not in existence in 119/8 when an ephebus from that place is found among the foreigners of the Athenian ephebia. All the ephebic colleges in Boeotia were strictly military in nature. When Greece came under Roman domination, these schools doubtless closed their doors, since the proverbially stupid Boeotians would not be likely to change them from military schools to universities, as the Athenians changed their school.

The clearest example of a city of this class, and perhaps the most interesting case of all, is presented to us by Miletus. We should certainly have expected a city of such importance as Miletus, one of the most flourishing and prosperous cities of Asia Minor, to have early founded and long maintained a strong ephebic organization of its own, and in actual fact we do find evidence of the existence of an ephebia in Miletus at the relatively early date 260/59. No doubt it continued a

¹⁶⁷ *JG* II 2 1031.

factor in the educational life of Miletus until 130/29 at least, when we have another notice of this institution. But after that our records, though rather numerous since the excavation of Miletus, are silent as to its fate. Did it continue to train ephebi? Did it decline in vigor and finally close its doors to the youth of the city?

A possible answer, a very probable answer is given to these questions by a consideration of the numbers of young men enrolled from Miletus in the Athenian ephebia. In the first inscription containing foreigners no Milesians occur.¹⁶⁸ In 117/6 we find three,¹⁶⁹ and ten years later in 107/6 only two.¹⁷⁰ Evidently the ephebic organization at Miletus is still caring for the great mass of its young men. But in the very next year for which we have a record (101/0), seven out of 36, almost one-fifth of the total number of foreigners, are Milesians.¹⁷¹ The next extant list, a fragmentary one, names but one Milesian out of 14 foreigners.¹⁷² It may be interesting to observe that the same list records the names of but three Athenians. In the next complete inscription, the last one in the century before Christ, for the year 39/8, there is a roster of 66 foreigners, of whom 14 or slightly more than one-fifth are again Milesians.¹⁷³ The next extant list, the first of our era, as well as those dated 84/5-92/3 A.D., 111/2 and 115/6¹⁷⁴ respectively, note the names of no foreigners but list in their place Milesians, the number of the first of the three inscriptions swelling to the astonishingly large total of 151 Milesians. What can be the explanation? I have already referred to the fact that Miletus with her colonies sent almost one-fourth of the total number of foreigners whose provenience is known. We have noticed that the representatives of Miletus in the ephebia in Athens seem to be on the increase just prior to the division of the ephebi into native Athenians and Milesians. It has been pointed out, too, that the latest mention of an ephebia in Miletus is

¹⁶⁸ *IG* II² 1008.

¹⁶⁹ *IG* II² 1009.

¹⁷⁰ *IG* II² 1011.

¹⁷¹ *IG* II² 1028.

¹⁷² *IG* II² 1031.

¹⁷³ *IG* II² 1043.

¹⁷⁴ *IG* III 1091, 1096, 1098.

of the year 130/29. What seems to have happened is this. For reasons that we do not know, the ephebia at Miletus was on the wane during the first century before Christ. The ephebi of Miletus were drawn in increasingly large numbers to the famous Athenian ephebia. Sometime between 39 B.C. and 84 A.D. the ephebia at Miletus became a shadow, or ceased to function altogether, and the ephebi transferred *en masse* to Athens. Then the Milesians, who had previously been represented in increasingly large numbers, and who with all the ephebi from the colonies of Miletus constituted a still larger proportion, became so heavily preponderant that the foreigners were no longer referred to by the indefinite term, *xenoi*, but became a part of the much larger group, the Milesians. The present state of our knowledge leaves the suggestion lacking in more positive supporting arguments.

The two following inscriptions show decreasing numbers of Milesians.¹⁷⁵ When the Milesian preponderance seems to have obtained no longer we find the non-Athenian ephebi referred to in all subsequent inscriptions as *epengraphoi*.

The reason why ephebic training at Athens was so attractive to many young men from centers that had an ephebic organization of their own is doubtless that Athens offered superior training amid surroundings which were replete with historical associations and in a country which was the cradle of the fine arts.

In this connection the case of Simulus of Tarentum is interesting. He took a year's training in the Delian ephebia and in the next year enrolled as an ephebus again in Athens.¹⁷⁶ No doubt much of his training was the same in both places, since Delos was in very close relation to Athens and her ephebia was patterned very closely after, and was surpassed only by that of Athens. We have no record of a Delian ephebus going to Athens but this is explained by the fact that Delos maintained a strong ephebia of her own.

"In it (the gymnasium) the ephebi made their rendezvous, for Delos was a miniature Athens in this respect also . . .

¹⁷⁵ *IG* III 1096, 1098. (Latter supplemented in *BCH* 38 (1914) 488 f.)

¹⁷⁶ J. Oehler, art *ephebia*, Pauly-Wissowa, V, 2746; *BCH* 15 (1891) 261, n. 3; *IG* II² 1028.

In it (the ephebia at Delos) Athenians predominated, but youths from Sidon, Tyre, Laodicea, Damascus, Ascalon, Alexandria, Phaselis, Alabanda, Sinope, Rome, Naples, Tarentum, and the Aegean islands and cities were also enrolled."¹⁷⁷ As supplementing the places mentioned by Ferguson we have records of ephebi at Delos, from Seleucia, Megalopolis, Byzantium, Cnossus, Chios, Tenedos, Naxos, Thera, Chalcis, Thebes, and Nicopolis.¹⁷⁸ It will be noted that a large number of the cities and islands named here are represented in the Athenian ephebia as well.

SONS OF CLERUCHS IN THE ATHENIAN EPHEBIA

The sons of cleruchs who entered the Athenian ephebia were, no doubt, recorded as Athenians. In speaking of the period immediately after 335 B.C., Forbes says, basing his statement on Beloch, "Still more ephebi, to the number perhaps of 150 annually, were sent in by Athens' cleruchies, which at this time numbered only five: Samos, Lemnos, Imbros, Scyros, and Salamis."¹⁷⁹

Salamis, however, does not seem to have been reckoned a cleruchy after 318 B.C., at which time it voluntarily surrendered itself to the Macedonians.¹⁸⁰ When it came again into the possession of Athens in 232 B.C., cleruchs were sent to settle in the island.¹⁸¹ What its exact status was from this time onward, whether cleruchy or dependency of Athens, as Tenedos, for example, is uncertain. At any rate we can be sure that it was not considered a cleruchy in the period 90-39 B.C. since ephebi from Salamis in this period are recorded as foreigners.¹⁸² We have no indication of a similar treatment of the ephebi from the other cleruchies. Forbes goes on to state, "In the reticence of literary sources and the paucity of the oldest ephebic inscriptions, we can name only one son of a cleruch who came to Athens for his ephebic duties, Epicurus. Epicurus, as Beloch remarks, would naturally have served as

¹⁷⁷ Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 409.

¹⁷⁸ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 214.

¹⁷⁹ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

¹⁸⁰ Diod., XVIII, 69; Paus. I, 35, 2.

¹⁸¹ Paus. II, 8, 6; Plut. *Arat.* 34.

¹⁸² *IG II* 2 1081, 1043.

an ephebus in Samos, where his father lived, had it not been a law that cleruchs' sons should come to Athens for this duty."¹⁸³

TREATMENT ACCORDED FOREIGN EPHEBI

There is little to indicate the treatment that was accorded the foreigners who enrolled in the ephebic college at Athens. No doubt they were treated in no way differently from the native Athenians. They had the same teachers (some of whom were likewise foreigners), received the same training and enjoyed much the same privileges. They are included in making up the total number of ephebi in the few inscriptions which make a specific statement of the total. In offering sacrifices and in paying devotion to the gods at the numerous festivals which the ephebi attended in a body, no discrimination seems to have been made between them. It is true that their names are listed separately and after the names of the native Athenians, which, as Dumont remarks, is a distinction hardly marked.¹⁸⁴ In the inscriptions of our era the ethnic of the foreigners is uniformly suppressed, while the deme name of the Athenians is still given. We have already mentioned the suggestion that this was done only for the purpose of decreasing the expense of setting up the stele, an outlay borne not by the state, but by the *kosmetes* or some wealthy ephebus.

The ephebi were organized into groups much after the fashion of the divisions of the army. These bands were commanded by officers selected from their own number. Among these *systemmata*, as the bands were called, natives and foreigners were equally divided, which must soon have tended to obliterate much of any class spirit present. The *systemmatarchs* were first selected from a small group of ephebi from the most influential and aristocratic families. Foreigners were in early times excluded from holding these offices.¹⁸⁵

In the inscriptions the ephebi are indiscriminately called *philoî*, sometimes *synephebi*, *systatai*, *gorgoi*, *gnēsioi*, and

¹⁸³ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

¹⁸⁴ Dumont, I, p. 97.

¹⁸⁵ Dittenberger, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

notably *syntricleinoi*, which last designation indicates that they ate together.¹⁸⁶

Any notable deed performed by a foreigner was equally mentioned with similar records of Athenians in the ephebic decrees.¹⁸⁷

XENOI, MEILESIOI, AND EPENGRAPHOI

We have noted the change in the manner of naming the foreigners, from *xenoi* in the centuries before Christ to *Meilesioi* in three inscriptions of the first century of our era and finally *epengraphoi* from the year 141/2 on. The opinion has been expressed that the change in name from *xenoi* to *epengraphoi* indicated a change in the regard in which they were held. This seems to be true only to the extent that when the ethnic was suppressed the name became pointless since there was no indication of their origin on the stele. The more general term, *epengraphoi*, "those added to the list," more appropriately described the names on the stele. Let us briefly consider each of these names.

The term, *xenoi*, found in seven ephebic inscriptions from 119/8 to 39/8 carries with it no invidious connotation such as later came to be associated with the Latin *hostis*. On the contrary, it was a term of the highest honor and respect and is often associated with *philos*. In its early use *xenos* denoted the stranger, who was to be received with hospitality as a guest, the native acting as host. He was thought to be under the special protection of Zeus, and considerate treatment of him was a sacred obligation enjoined upon all.¹⁸⁸ The spurious decree mentioned on page 14 by which in consideration of the services of Hippocrates, the inhabitants of Cos were permitted to enter the Athenian ephebia on the same basis as the Athenians, seems to indicate that a high rating was placed on this permission. It was an honor granted foreigners to share in the training provided for Athenian ephebi, and those who availed themselves of this privilege seem to have been treated

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, cf. Boeckh on CIG 282.

¹⁸⁷ Dumont, I, p. 99; IG II² 1008, 1011.

¹⁸⁸ Liddell and Scott, s. v. *xenos*. IG III 1091, 1096, 1098. (The last supplemented by BCH 38(1914) 422 f.)

with every mark of honor and respect in accordance with the favor proffered.

The name Milesians occurs in three inscriptions of the years 84/5-92/3 A.D., 111/2, and 115/6 respectively. Many theories have been advanced to account for the employment of this term. Dittenberger thinks that there were a large number of Milesians in Athens, and that the individuals whose names are preserved for us in these three inscriptions were ephebi from this "little Miletus" in Athens. In his opinion the Milesians included no other foreigners.¹⁸⁹ One is immediately led to ask two questions. Is it not strange that no names of foreigners from other places occur in these years? It is true that in three inscriptions, immediately prior to the one in which the Milesians occur, dated 13/2 B.C., 44/5 A.D. (or 45/6), and 40-53 respectively,¹⁹⁰ no indication is given of the presence of foreigners, but with few exceptions every other extant inscription dating after 119/8 preserves a roster of non-Athenian ephebi. Are we warranted in assuming a colony of Milesians in Athens, large enough to account for 151 young men about eighteen years old enrolling in any given year? I am inclined to answer with Dumont by an emphatic negative.

SONS OF METICS IN THE ATHENIAN EPHEBIA

This leads us to the question, what proportion, if any, of the foreigners were sons of metics? The metics, foreigners resident in Athens who had the rights of *commercium*, but not of *connubium* or citizenship in general, constituted a considerable portion of the population of Athens. The census taken by Demetrius of Phalerum in 309 B.C. showed 10,000 adult men.¹⁹¹ Speaking of the foreign population of Athens about 166 B.C. Ferguson says, "The resident aliens were, of course, less numerous than in the time of Demetrius of Phalerum," and he goes on to speak of the large number of metics from Heraclea Pontica, Miletus, and Antioch, of whom "there seem to have been regular colonies in Attica."

¹⁸⁹ Dittenberger, *op. cit.*, p. 81; cf. Diod., XIII, 97.

¹⁹⁰ IG III 1076, 1079 and 1080, 1081. Cf. BCH 38(1914) 422 f.

¹⁹¹ Athen., XI, 273c.

The same writer estimates that at this period (166 B.C.) there were from 75,000 to 100,000 native Athenians.¹⁹²

Twice only in the years from 138/7 to the last year for which we have a record did the number of native Athenians enrolled in the ephebia exceed 150. For the most part the number in any one year was below the one hundred mark. This number, we must remember, was drawn from a population of from 75,000 to 100,000 native Athenians or, as Beloch gives the numbers, from a total of 15,000 to 20,000 adult males.¹⁹³ Beloch indicates that these totals are probably too high. Now granting that there were 10,000 resident aliens, adult males, in Athens at this period, a number which is far too high; and granting further that all of them were metics from Miletus, which we know was not by any means even approximately the truth, it is preposterous to suppose that 10,000 metics from Miletus would send in one year almost double, in the second year about four times, and in the third year twelve times the number of native Athenian ephebi, as our records show was the case.

We have no means of determining absolutely what proportion of foreigners were sons of metics. That some were of this class seems only reasonable. That any large percentage or all of them were sons of metics, I hold to be excluded by the facts that Dumont adduces. He points out that the number of metics in Athens was relatively fixed. The number of foreigners, on the contrary, varies between very wide limits in comparatively short periods of time. The fluctuations in numbers of Milesians is even greater than that of the native Athenian ephebi. If all or a large percentage of the foreigners were sons of metics, this variation would have to be accounted for by an influx of aliens from abroad in certain years and by an emigration from Attica in other years. On the whole, then, we should probably conclude that there were few foreign ephebi who were sons of metics.

Thalheim,¹⁹⁴ followed by Forbes,¹⁹⁵ advances the theory that the term Milesians was applied to the whole group of

¹⁹² Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 316.

¹⁹³ Beloch, *op. cit.*, p. 353.

¹⁹⁴ Thalheim, art. *ephebia*, Pauly-Wissowa V, 2740.

¹⁹⁵ Forbes, *op. cit.*, pp. 135-136.

foreigners from one constituent preponderant part. We feel that we can go one step farther and suggest that the ephebia at Miletus seems to have been in existence earlier, but at this particular period was at a low ebb or had ceased to exist altogether and that a large number of Milesians entered the ephebia at Athens *en masse*, who together with the ephebi from the colonies of Miletus, constituting the overwhelming majority of foreigners, were by reason of that fact called collectively the Milesians. We shall recapitulate our arguments on this point briefly:

1. Miletus had a native ephebia as late as 130/29.
2. Very shortly thereafter the number of Milesians in the Athenian ephebia began to increase.
2. The number of non-Athenian ephebi is enormously increased in a given year to a figure overtopped once only in all the later history of the ephebia, and then only by three ephebi.
4. Shortly thereafter the number of Milesians decreases, showing that the abnormal situation was changed and that the ordinary course of affairs was being resumed.
5. The name Milesians finally gives way to the colorless *epengraphoi*.

Dumont accounts for the large number of Milesians in 111/2 by saying that this was a special group of Milesians who came over as delegates to honor the emperor Hadrian.¹⁹⁶ If he means to refer thus to Hadrian's visit to Athens while he was emperor, the statement needs correction since Hadrian's ascent to the throne took place in 117/8.¹⁹⁷ The latest extant inscription noting Milesians is of the year 115/6.¹⁹⁸

The term *epengraphoi* was first used in an inscription about the year 100 of our era,¹⁹⁹ and was without exception so used until our records cease. It seems to mean simply, "those enrolled in addition."

Thalheim wishes to identify the *epengraphoi* with the young men who were about to become ephebi.²⁰⁰ Graindor refutes this hypothesis however.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁶ Dumont, I, p. 104.

¹⁹⁷ Niese, *Grundriss d. röm. Geschichte* (1910) pp. 334-335.

¹⁹⁸ *IG* III 1098, *BCH* 38(1914) 422 f.

¹⁹⁹ *IG* III 1092.

²⁰⁰ Thalheim, art. *ephebia*, Pauly-Wissowa, V, 2740.

²⁰¹ Graindor, *Musée Belge* 26(1922) pp. 225-227.

EXPENDITURES OF EPHEBI

We do not know all the demands made upon the purses of the ephebi, but we can be sure that they were many and large. All incidental expenses of the ephebia were met not by the state treasury, but by some private individual. Often a wealthy *kosmetes* would defray all such expenses from his private purse. Many of the richer students thought it an honor to make generous contributions in meeting the expenses of the gymnasium. "The ephebus, teacher, or *kosmetes*, who defrayed any of the expense of the gymnasium was called a *gymnasiarch*."²⁰² Foreign ephebi might hold the office of *gymnasiarch*, although they seemed, at first at least, to have been excluded from other offices. So we find an interesting little note in an inscription opposite nine names of youths from Miletus, "he oiled five days,"²⁰³ indicating that these foreigners bore the expense of furnishing the oil used in anointing the bodies of the ephebi for their gymnastic exercises.

FOREIGN TEACHERS

We find, interestingly enough, that a number of the ephebic faculty of whom we have a record were from cities other than Athens. These foreign teachers, with one exception, were from towns from which foreign ephebi came.

The *paidotribes* was one of the most important of the guild of the *paideutai*, and is usually listed well up in the roster of teachers, at one period next after the *kosmetes*. We find that in the year 128/7 a certain Nico, son of Alexis, of the city of Berytus filled the office of *paidotribes*.²⁰⁴

Many of the officials in the later ephebia had assistants and substitutes. One such was the *hypopaidotribes*. The name of Telesphorus of Miletus appears as *hypopaidotribes* in three inscriptions from the years 166/7 to 172/3, during all of which time he doubtless served in this capacity.²⁰⁵

²⁰² Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

²⁰³ IG III 1098 l. 21.

²⁰⁴ BCH 30(1906) pp. 226 ff. Michel (Suppl.) 1526; *Rev. Belge* 3(1924) pp. 13 ff.

²⁰⁵ IG III 1128, 1133, 1134.

A fellow-countryman of Telesphorus, Helenus, filled the humble office of *lentiarios* along with him in 172/3. His duty was, perhaps, to take care of the towels and cut loin cloths for the ephebi. Another Milesian, Trophimus, at some time between 110 and 115 A.D. acted as the *thyroros* or "door-keeper." This official was usually listed last in the roster of officers.²⁰⁶

The Cretans were known in antiquity for their skill with the bow. It does not surprise us, therefore, to find Sondros of Crete holding the position of *toxotes*.²⁰⁷ Since this inscription is to be dated 282/1, Sondros was the first foreign ephebic instructor of whom we have record. The instructor in archery was usually placed fifth in the list of teachers. This instructor was dropped in 39/8.

The *hoplomachos* gave instruction in heavy-armed fighting. Later when the military spirit had assumed a less important position, he took over the duties of the *akontistes* (the javelin instructor) and the *toxotes*, when these officers were dropped. The only *hypohoplomachos* known to us is a foreigner from Tarsus.²⁰⁸

It would be strange indeed, if in such a select group of young men as were assembled in the Athenian ephebia, there were not a few who had achieved some meed of fame, the record of which should have come down to us through the ages. One of the tasks left unapproached in connection with this study is the search for individuals of this type, but this project must bide its time until the completion of the Pauly-Wissowa *Real-Encyclopädie*.

In this study we have endeavored to present all of the information concerning the foreigners in the Athenian ephebia, so far as this information is available in extant inscriptions.

The tables presented in the body of this treatise may serve as a convenient summary of the data on the foreigners in the Athenian ephebia.

²⁰⁶ IG III 1080.

²⁰⁷ IG II² 665.

²⁰⁸ BCH 30(1906) pp. 226 ff.

APPENDIX

ALPHABETIC LIST OF PLACES HAVING AN EPHEBIC ORGANIZATION, BASED ON THE LISTS OF OEHLER, POLAND, AND FORBES.¹

- Acmonia (Asia Minor) *CIG* 3858 (O).
 Acraephia (Boeotia) *IG* VII 2715-2721; *BCH* 23(1899) 193ff. 1, 2 (O).
 Aegosthena (Megaris) *IG* VII 209-220. s. 3 B.C. (O).
 Alabanda (Asia Minor) *BCH* 18(1894) 34 (O).
 Alexandria (Egypt) *Sammelb.* 5069; *PTeb.* II 316; *BGU* IV 1084; *PSI* VII 777; *Journ. Egypt. Arch.* 12(1926) 246; Dio Cassius LI 6, 1 (F).
 Alinda (Asia Minor) *BCH* 15(1891) 540, 5 (O).
 Amorgos (s.v. Arcesine) (Aegean Islands) *IG* XII 7. 421, 424 (P).
 Anthedon (Boeotia) *IG* VII 4172 (O).
 Antioch (Syria) *Plut. Cato Minor* 13; *Plut. Pompey* 40; *Julian, Misop.* 358Bff. (F).
 Apamea Cibotos (Asia Minor) *IG Rom.* IV 788; *REG* 2(1889) 30; *Rev. Arch.* III 12 (1888 II) 221f. n. 7 (O).
 Aphrodisias (Asia Minor) *Le Bas-Waddington* III 1618 (O).
 Apollonia (Asia Minor) *Michel, Recueil* etc., 643; *CIG* 3567; *Ath. Mitt.* 20(1895) 243. (O. gives this last reference for Thyatira, q. v.)
 Apollonia (Pisidia) *BCH* 17(1892) 255, 3 (O).
 Apollonis (Apollonides, Asia Minor) *BCH* 17(1893) 255 (see *supra*); *BCH* 10(1886) 415, 3; *BCH* 11(1887) 87, 6; *BCH* 18(1894) 158f. *REG* 3(1890) 69, 22; *Denkschr. Wien Ak.* 53(1910) 2. Abh. 47ff. 96-97 (O).
 Arcesine (s. v. Amorgos) (Aegean Islands) *IG* XII 7. 115 (F).
 Argos (Peloponnesus) *IG* IV 589 (O).
 Arsinoe (Egypt) *BGU* II 362, p. 12, l. 6 (F).
 Ascarion (Asia Minor) *BCH* 18(1894) 541 (F).
 Babylon *Klio* 9(1909) 353, 1 (F).
 Berytus (Phoenicia) *Rev. Arch.* II 33(1877) 61, 9 (O).
 Branchidae (Asia Minor) *Br. Mus. Inscr.* 924-5; *JHS* 6(1885) 350, 98 (O).
 Byblus (Phoenicia) *Philol.* 19(1863) 137 (O).
 Byzantium (Macedonia and Thrace) *Dethier-Mordtmann, Epigraphik von Byzantion* etc., 73, 56; *Denkschr. Wien Ak.* 13(1864) 77, 3 (O).
 Callipolis (Macedonia and Thrace) *Dumont-Homolle, Mél. d'arch.* p. 435, n. 100 x (O).
 Capri (Island on the Campanian coast) *Suet. Aug.* 98 (F).
 Carystus (Euboea) *IG* XII 9. 20 (F).
 Cedraee (Asia Minor) *BCH* 18(1894) 27, 6 (F).

¹ (O) J. Oehler, art. *ephebia*, *Pauly-Wissowa* V, 2741-2743.

(P) Fr. Poland, *Die Geschichte des griechischen Vereinswesens*, Leipzig, 1909, pp. 90-92, and *Nachträge*, 537-538.

(F) C. A. Forbes, *Greek Physical Education*, New York, 1929, Appendix, pp. 263-264.

- Celetrum (Macedonia and Thrace) *CIG* 1957g Add. (P). Le Bas-Foucart 1331 (O).
- Chaeronea (Boeotia) *IG* VII 3293-4, 3297-8. cf. 3295, 3299 (O).
- Chalcis (Euboea) *IG* XII 9. 904, 916, 952 (F).
- Chios (Aegean Islands) Dittenberger, *SIG*³ 959 (P).
- Chorsiae (Boeotia) *IG* VII 2389, 2390 (O).
- Chytri (Cyprus) *IG Rom.* III 935 (P).
- Cibyra (Asia Minor) Le Bas Waddington III 1213 (O). *CIG* 4380a Add. (P).
- Cius (Asia Minor) *BCH* 15(1891) 481f. (108/9 A.D.); *Ath. Mitt.* 24(1899) 415ff. (O).
- Colonides (Messenia) *IG* VII 402 (P).
- Colossae (Asia Minor) *IG Rom.* IV 870 (O).
- Copae (Boeotia) *IG* VII 2781-89 (P).
- Corcyra (Ionian Island) *IG* IX 732 (O).
- Corone (Peloponnesus) Le Bas-Foucart 305; *IG* V 1. 1398 (P).
- Cos (Aegean Islands) *Inscr. Cos* 65, 106, 107, 108-111 (P).
- Crete (Dreros) Dittenberger, *SIG*³ 527 (O).
- Cyaneae (Asia Minor) *JHS* 15(1895) 3, 24; *Denkschr. Wien Ak.* 45(1897) p. 28, n. 28 (O).
- Cyme (Asia Minor) *CIG* 3524 (O).
- Cyprus (s. v. Chytri, Lapethus, and Salamis).
- Cyrene (Libya) Michel, *Recueil* etc., 644 (O).
- Cyzicus (Asia Minor) *CIG* 3660, 3665; *Ath. Mitt.* 4(1879) 21; *Ath. Mitt.* 7(1882) 252; *JHS* 28(1903) 89ff. (O). Dittenberger, *SIG*³ 798 (2-14 A.D.); Dethier-Mordtmann, *Epigraphik von Byzantion*, etc., 79, 17; Collignon (1877) 79, 1 (P).
- Delos (Aegean Islands) *BCH* 3(1879) 376, 16; *BCH* 13(1889) 420; *BCH* 15(1891) 263ff. *OGI* I 343 (O). *BCH* 16(1892) 159, 17; *BCH* 3(1879) 378, 16; *BCH* 13(1889) 420ff. *BCH* 15(1891) 252ff. 1; *BCH* 29(1905) 229ff. 89 (P).
- Delphi (Phocis) Dittenberger, *SIG*³ 897 (F).
- Deuriopus (Macedonia and Thrace) *Pandora* (1870) n. 2 (O). *Z. f. vgl. Rechtswiss.* 16(1903) 284f. n. 45 (P).
- Dreros (s. v. Crete) Dittenberger, *SIG*³ 527 (F).
- Edessa (Macedonia and Thrace) *CIG* add. 1997c. (ca. 200 A.D.) *Arch.-epigr. Mitt. aus Oesterr.-Ung.* 12(1888) 190, 8 (P).
- Egypt *Arch. Pap.* 2(1903) 510, n. 44 (P).
- Elaea (Macedonia and Thrace) *Mous. k. Bibl.* 2(1875-6) 18; *Mous. k. Bibl.* 3(1879-80) 141, 186-7 (O). Collignon, (1877) 79ff. n. 2 (P).
- Ephesus (Asia Minor) *Br. Mus. Inscr.* 481, 579a; Le Bas-Waddington, III 1564b; Wiener Schedenapparat (O).
- Eretria (Euboea) Michel, *Recueil* etc., 640 (end of s. 4 B.C.); *BCH* 2(1878) 277, 5; *AJArch* 11(1896) 188, 22; Dittenberger, *SIG*³ 714 (s. 2 B.C.) (O). *IG* XII 9. 234, 235, 240, 243 (P).
- Eriza (Asia Minor) *BCH* 14(1890) 103, 7 (115 A.D.) (F).
- Fayum (Egypt) *OGI* 176, 178 (P).

- Gela (Sicily) *IG* XIV 256 (O).
 Haliartus (Boeotia) *IG* VII 2849 (F).
 Halicarnassus (Asia Minor) *SB Wien Ak.* 132(1895) p. 29, n. 2; cf. *Br. Mus. Inscr.* 898, 905 (O).
 Haluntium (Sicily) *IG* XIV 369ff. (O).
 Heraclea Pontica (Asia Minor) *SB Berlin Ak.* (1888 II) 884, n. 84 (O).
BCH 22(1898) 493ff. 2 (P).
 Hermopolis (Egypt) *CPR* 20; *PAmh* II 124; *PFlor* 57, 79; *PRyl* I 101 (F).
 Hierocaesarea (Asia Minor) *BCH* 11(1887) 105, 26 (F).
 Hyettus (Boeotia) *IG* VII 2809-2832 (s. 3 B.C.) (O).
 Iasus (Asia Minor) *BCH* 11(1887) 214, 3; *REG* 6(1893) 179, 14 and 190f. 38 (P).
 Icaria (Aegean Islands) Collignon, (1877) 81-2, n. 3 (P).
 Ilium (Asia Minor) *CIG* 3597a, 3620 (O).
 Jerusalem (Palestine) 2 *Macc.* iv. 9ff. (F).
 Karnak (Egypt) *Arch. Pap.* 2(1903) 553, n. 35 (P).
 Lagina (Asia Minor) Benndorf-Niemann, *Lykien*, I 156, 134b, 4 and 63 (P).
 Lampsacus (Asia Minor) *CIG* 3644 (O).
 Lapethus (Cypress) *OGI* 583 (P).
 Lebadea (Boeotia) *IG* VII 3065-3072 (s. 2 B.C.) (O).
 Lesbos (Aegean Islands) *IG* XII 2. 134 (O).
 Lydae (Asia Minor) *TAM* II 1, 132 (F).
 Magnesia (on the Meander) (Asia Minor) Dittenberger *SIG*³ 589 (O, P).
 Massilia (Gaul) *IG* XIV 2445 (O).
 Megara (Megaris) Michel, *Recueil* etc., 618-22 (O).
 Melos (Aegean Islands) *IG* XII 3. 1074 (P).
 Metropolis (Asia Minor) *CIG* 3034 (O).
 Miletus (Asia Minor) *Milet* I 3(1914) n. 139; *Milet* I 7(1924) n. 203; *Miletbericht* 7, p. 28 (F).
 Moesia superior *CIL* IV 8175 (O).
 Mycenae (Peloponnesus) *IG* IV 497 (P).
 Mylasa (Asia Minor) *SB Wien Ak.* 132(1895) 2. Abh. p. 12, n. 1 (O).
 Mytilene (Lesbos) *IG* XII 2. 134 (O, P).
 Naples (Italy) Strabo V p. 246 Cas. (F).
 Narycus (Opuntic Locris) *IG* VII 285 (s. 1 B.C.) (O).
 Naxos (Aegean Islands) *CIG* 2416 (O). *IG* XII 5. 39 (P).
 Netum (Sicily) *IG* XIV 240 (O).
 Nicopolis Epict. III 1, 34 (F).
 Notium (Asia Minor) *Jh. Oesterr.* 8(1905) 102f. cf. (1906) *Beiblatt* sp. 57ff. (P).
 Nysa (Asia Minor) Strabo XIV p. 650 Cas. (P).
 Odessus (Macedonia and Thrace) *Rev. Arch.* 35(1878 I) 114, 207, 112, 113, n. 5 (O, P).
 Opus (Opuntic Locris) *IG* IX 1. 285 (P).

- Orchomenus (Boeotia) *IG* VII 3174-5, 3178-80, 3188. cf. 3181-7, 3176-7, 3189 (P).
- Oxyrhynchus (Egypt) *POxy* I 42, III 477, VI 706, IX 1202, XIV 1697, 1703, 1705 (F).
- Panamara (Asia Minor) *BCH* 11(1887) 375, 1 (O, P).
- Paros (Aegean Islands) *IG* XII 5. 144, 145, 173, 174, 176, 232 (O, P).
- Pellene (Peloponnesus) Paus. VII 27, 5 (P).
- Pergamum (Asia Minor) Le Bas-Waddington III 1721e; *Ath. Mitt.* 27(1902) 105, n. 108; *Inscr. Perg.* 252, 273, 323, 458; *CIG* 3538, 3567; Le Bas-Waddington III 1720c (O, P).
- Perge (Asia Minor) Lanckoronski, *Städte Pamphyl. u. Pisid.* I 164 n. 29 (P).
- Perinthus (Macedonia and Thrace) Dumont-Homolle *Mél. d'arch.* 397, n. 74 (P).
- Philadelphia (Asia Minor) *CIG* 3431; Le Bas-Waddington III 643, 654; *IG Rom.* IV 1633; *CIG* 3424, 3421 (O, P).
- Philae (Egypt) *OGI* I 188-9 (P).
- Philippopolis (Macedonia and Thrace) Dumont-Homolle, *Mél. d'arch.* 336, n. 43 (P).
- Plataea (Boeotia) *IG* VII 1669, 4239 (P).
- Pompeiiopolis (Asia Minor) *BCH* 27(1903) 326-7 n. 31-3 (P).
- Priene (Asia Minor) *Inscr. Priene* 123 (P).
- Rhodes (Aegean Islands) *IG* XII 1. 95b; *Ath. Mitt.* 21(1896) 42, 9 (O, P).
- Salamis (Cyprus) Le Bas-Waddington III 2756, 2773 (O).
- Salluntum (Illyricum) *IG* XIV 311 (P).
- Samos (Aegean Islands) *BCH* 5(1881) 480ff. n. 3-4; *SEG* I 266 (F).
- Seleucia (Syria) Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos* xxiv.
- Sestus (Macedonia and Thrace) *Br. Mus. Inscr.* IV 2, 1000 (P).
- Sicily (s. v. Gela, Haluntium, Netum).
- Sicyon (Peloponnesus) Paus. II 10, 7 (P).
- Smyrna (Asia Minor) *CIG* 3185, 3326; Cic. *Pro Flacco* 31, 75 (P).
- Sparta (Peloponnesus) *IG* V 1. 38, 39, 44, 45, 47, 59, 66, 67, 258, 284, 286, 287, 295, 303, 493, 548, 554, 653a, 653b, 1508 in Add. (P). Paus III 14, 8-10, 20, 1 (O).
- Stratonicea (Asia Minor) *CIG* 2715; *BCH* 11(1887) 315f. (P). (O. claims this last for Panamara.)
- Stratonicea (Hadrianopolis, Asia Minor) *CIG* 3567, 2715a; Michel. *Recueil* etc., 643 (P).
- Tarmia (Asia Minor) *BCH* 10(1886) 490, 3; 491, 4 (O). Michel, *Recueil* etc., 1190; *Ath. Mitt.* 11(1886) 327, n. 2 (P).
- Tegea (Peloponnesus) *IG* V 2, 43 (P). *BCH* 17(1893) 20, 24; *BCH* 25(1901) 275, 12 (ca. 200 B.C.) (O).
- Tenos (Aegean Islands) Kaibel, *Epigr. gr.* 948; *IG* XII 5. 911 (O).
- Teos (Asia Minor) *CIG* 3062, 3079, 3085, 3086, 3098, 3101. 3112; Le Bas-Waddington III 1558; Dittenberger, *SIG* 3 578 (300 B.C.) (O).

- Termessus (Asia Minor) Lanckoronski, *Stadte Pamph. u. Pisid.* II 202, 52 (P).
- Theadelphia (Egypt) *Sammelb.* 6159 (F).
- Thebes (Boeotia) *IG VII* 2442. cf. 2429-45. (s. 4 B.C. to Roman Age) (O).
- Themisonium (Asia Minor) Michel, *Recueil etc.*, 544 (P).
- Thera (Aegean Islands) *IG XII* 3. 330, 338, 339, 496, 524 (O). *IG XII* 3. 517 (P).
- Therapne (Peloponnesus) Paus. III 20, 2 (P).
- Thespieae (Boeotia) *IG VII* 1747-1750, 1756, 1757 (P). *SEG III* 333, 339 (F).
- Thessalonica (Macedonia and Thrace) Duchesne-Bayet, *Memoire etc.*, (O); *ibid.* p. 13, n. 2; *ibid.* p. 44, n. 60 (P).
- Thisbe (Boeotia) *SEG III* 351-3 (F).
- Thuria (Peloponnesus) *IG V* 1. 1384, 1386 (O, P).
- Thyatira (Asia Minor) *Ath. Mitt.* 20 (1895) 243; *BCH* 18 (1894) 541; *BCH* 10 (1886) 415, n. 23. (But of the last two references O. claims the former for Ascarion, and the latter for Apollonis.) (O, P).
- Tomi (Macedonia and Thrace) *Arch-epigr. Mitt. aus Oesterr.-Ung.* 6(1882) 24 n. 47 (P).
- Troezen (Peloponnesus) *IG IV* 749 (P). *IG IV* 753 (O).
- Xanthus (Asia Minor) *JHS* 15(1895) 123, 12 (O). *IG Rom.* III 630 (P).

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**FOLKLORE IN THE WORKS OF
MARK TWAIN**

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PREFATORY NOTE

I am indebted to Professor Louise Pound of the Department of English at the University of Nebraska for the suggestion of the subject of my study and for much other help, and to Professor L. C. Wimberly of the same Department for assistance in the organization of my material and for constant encouragement and supervision. To both I wish to express my appreciation.

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FOLKLORE IN THE WORKS OF MARK TWAIN

I

INTRODUCTION

In assembling for investigation those beliefs and customs that fall under the general head of *folklore* the student may draw upon two principal sources or upon either one of these sources. He may go directly to the people among whom such beliefs and customs are current, or he may consult those written or printed records that most faithfully reflect popular superstitions and usages. Ideally, he should have access to both sources. He should have the opportunity to study his materials as they make up part of the living thought and manners of the folk. And he should, moreover, be in a position to examine these materials as they have been caught up and embodied in such writings as have employed them in an intelligent and sympathetic way. Happily, the student of folk beliefs and customs occasionally discovers a writer who may be said to combine in himself both these general sources. Such a writer is Mark Twain, so far, especially, as he confines himself to a depiction of life along the Mississippi — to that humble background or cultural milieu of which he was a product.

Democratic and typically American, Mark Twain was, in Howells' phrase, "the Lincoln of American letters." In a profound sense he was a man of the people. Their outlook on life was his. Their sayings and their superstitions, as recorded, for example, in *Tom Sawyer*, or in *Huckleberry Finn*, were natively his, and they come to his readers in all their original character, unimpaired by literary handling or artistic distortion. The world he knew as a boy made its inevitable claims upon him as a writer — claims that were whole-heartedly recognized in the simplicity and sincerity that went to the making of his books. This world was a world at once fearsome and picturesque by virtue of its portents and omens, its ghosts and witches. It was a world

which Mark Twain must have recalled when he made the following entry in *Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar*:

Let me make the superstitions of a nation and I care not who makes its laws or its songs either.¹

Thus does Mark Twain attest in an obscure note his opinion of those hand-me-down beliefs and customs known in his day — just prior to any wide scientific examination of them as "folklore." Nor was this observation one that he appreciated only at the conclusion of his more active literary career, only with the publication of *Following the Equator*, in which it appeared, in 1896. Twenty years earlier, when *Tom Sawyer* went to the publisher, Mark Twain realized sufficiently the importance of the folklore content to say in a prefatory note:

The odd superstitions touched upon were all prevalent among children and slaves in the West at the period of this story—that is to say, thirty or forty years ago.

Hartford, 1876.

The Author.²

Through succeeding works a variable folklore content indicates that at no time did he swerve from belief in the importance of folklore. Leanness in certain volumes indicates only that Mark Twain recognized an artistry in contrast; for in many of his other works the degree of attention given superstitious beliefs attests investigation of available material to supplement his own first-hand knowledge.

In this study, Mississippi Valley folklore has been given major consideration. The beliefs of this section had become, from oft-repeated "general conversation which. . . drifted . . . into talk about dreams and superstitions,"³ a part of Mark Twain's mental equipment in youth. Of the lore here included, the bulk is that which was the common talk of the Mississippi Valley region in the nineteenth century. Reminiscences and survivals of folklore from other lands will be noted simply as examples of the diffusion that must account for similarities in folk beliefs in distant countries, local adaptations or originations excepted. In his travels Mark Twain

¹ *Following the Equator*, II, 163.

² *Tom Sawyer*, Preface, p. xix.

³ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 304.

observed, or made inquiry about, the folk-customs of the countries and regions he was visiting and his reports recount his findings rather fully. These, since they are obviously at second-hand and since they testify to his interest alone, have not been included. That his interest was great, however, a section of his report of a visit to India proves:

. . . . You can get the *facts* of a custom—like caste, and Suttee, and Thuggee, and so on—and with the facts a theory which tries to explain, but never quite does it to your satisfaction. You can never quite understand *how* so strange a thing could have been born, nor *why*.⁴

Here, it will be seen, Mark Twain becomes almost the anthropologist. The enthusiasm with which he gathers knowledge of customs and traditions indicates that he would have been an avid student of folklore. Certainly his knowledge of human nature, his aptness in sensing human motives, would have been valuable applied to problems rising from the study of superstition. But his approach was destined to be quizzical rather than scholarly. We would not have it otherwise; and yet it is truly regrettable that he did not find time to compile, for instance, all the folklore of Negro derivation which he must have known, for with the death of the older Negroes it is rapidly disappearing.

In two volumes, *The Prince and the Pauper* and *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, many superstitions of early England are included. Mark Twain, while recognizing their antiquity, does not certify their period with any exactitude.

The customs touched upon in this tale are historical, It is not pretended that these customs existed in England in the sixth century; no, it is only pretended that inasmuch as they existed in the English and other civilizations of far later times, it is safe to consider that it is no libel upon the sixth century to suppose them to have been in practice in that day also. . . .⁵

Many of the instances of magic and enchantment to which Mr. Clemens refers in *The Connecticut Yankee* are directly traceable to Malory's *Morte D'Arthur*. Other customs that

⁴ *Following the Equator*, II, 130.

⁵ *A Connecticut Yankee*, *Preface*, p. xxi.

Mark Twain included in this and kindred productions had been adapted to his especial situations by a happy faculty for juxtaposition with just that touch of incongruity that makes for humor. Their diversity may be accounted for only by a breadth of reading that must have ranged from current robber and pirate tales, through Homer, Shakespeare, MacPherson's *Ossian*, the *Bible*, the *Arabian Nights*, and *Robin Hood*, to the most detailed period-histories available in his day.

But neither casual reading, however diversified, nor childhood word-of-mouth sources could have supplied him with the details of fairy-lore found in one of his final works. With but slight exceptions, fairies do not appear in Negro folklore, nor were they common in the Mississippi Valley folklore of Mark Twain's childhood. Scarcely the most casual mention of a fairy appears in any of his writings except one, the *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc*, published serially and anonymously in 1895 and 1896 — and these volumes compensate for the omissions in all the rest by the richness of their Continental fairy-lore. Mark Twain had long been a profound admirer of the character of Joan of Arc, had long felt the warmest stirrings of indignation over the injustices done her. When he resolved to make her the central figure of a tale, it was with a serious intent to place her character before the world in a new way. He realized, however, that if he wrote the book under his own name his readers would laugh, would think that he was poking fun. Therefore he published *Joan of Arc* anonymously, and considered it foremost among his writings.

The initial situation of the Joan book, he realized, must interest his reader but must serve to disguise himself as author. It is significant that for this important opening incident he selected the intimate companionship of Joan and her playmates with the *fairies* of *L'Arbre Fée de Bourlemont*,

the traditional fairy tree.⁶ When the fairies were banished, it was Joan who defended them.⁷

Of all the proofs of Mark Twain's belief in the literary effect of the use of folklore this is perhaps the most clear. Furthermore, in addition to providing an understanding of the period in which Joan lived and the superstitious nature of the folk of that day, it served as a preparation for the reader's acceptance of Joan's Voices, for:

. . . . Of course no one doubted that she had seen supernatural beings and been spoken to and advised by them. And of course no one doubted that by supernatural help miracles had been done by Joan, It would have been foolish to doubt these things, for we all know that the air is full of devils and angels that are visible to traffickers in magic on the one hand and to the stainlessly holy on the other; but what many and perhaps most did doubt was, that Joan's visions, Voices, and miracles came from God.⁸

But such items, although indicative of Mark Twain's keen interest in folklore and his appreciation of its significance to humankind, are not, as has been noted, sufficiently indigenous to America *per se* to be discussed at length in the present study. Major attention will therefore be accorded to the Mississippi Valley folklore which he knew at first-hand, and which he has scattered so liberally through his works.

⁶ *Joan of Arc*, I, 9 f.: "In a noble open space carpeted with grass on the high ground toward Vaucouleurs stood a most majestic beech tree with wide-reaching arms and a grand spread of shade, and by it a limpid spring of cold water; and on summer days the children went there—oh, every summer for more than five hundred years—went there and sang and danced around the tree for hours together, refreshing themselves at the spring from time to time, and it was most lovely and enjoyable. Also they made wreaths of flowers and hung them upon the tree and about the spring to please the fairies that lived there; for they liked that, being idle innocent little creatures, as all fairies are, and fond of anything delicate and pretty like wild flowers put together in that way. And in return for this attention the fairies did any friendly thing they could for the children, such as keeping the spring always full and clear and cold, and driving away serpents and insects that sting; and so there was never any unkindness between the fairies and the children during more than five hundred years—tradition said a thousand—but only the warmest affection and the most perfect trust and confidence; and whenever a child died the fairies mourned just as that child's playmates did, and the sign of it was there to see; for before the dawn on the day of the funeral they hung a little immortelle over the place where that child was used to sit under the tree. I know this to be true by my own eyes; it is not hearsay. And the reason it was known that the fairies did it was this—that it was made all of black flowers of a sort not known in France anywhere."

⁷ See *ibid.*, I, 14 ff.

⁸ *Ibid.*, II, 158.

II

GHOSTLORE

The conversation of Mark Twain's youth, as nearly as it may be reconstructed from his works, must have been rife with talk of "ghosts." In speaking of his boyhood, he states definitely the importance of the ghost story in the day's routine:

. . . . I can hear Uncle Dan'l [a colored servant] telling the immortal tales which Uncle Remus Harris was to gather into his book and charm the world with, by and by; and I can feel again the creepy joy which quivered through me when the time for the ghost story was reached—and the sense of regret, too, which came over me, for it was always the last story of the evening and there was nothing between it and the unwelcome bed.¹

These stories which impressed him so deeply he was later to recount to his own children and to lecture-hall audiences, as is instanced by an entry in the biography by his little daughter Susy. On the occasion of his appearance at a girl's college as a lecturer the child had recorded:

. . . . He read "The Golden Arm," a ghost story that he heard down South when he was a little boy. "The Golden Arm" papa had told me before, but he had startled me so that I did not much wish to hear it again. But I had resolved this time to be prepared and not to let myself be startled, but still papa did, and very much; he startled the whole roomful of people and they jumped as one man.²

Of the origin of the ghost in folk conception Mr. Clemens gives no hint. Belief was apparently common that a person's ghost took form just at the moment of death, for one man was said to be "this moment delivering up the ghost,"³ and another "turned his face to the wall and gave up the ghost."⁴

¹ *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, I, 112 f.

² *Ibid.*, II, 170. Mark Twain quotes this story, with directions for effective telling, in full in *The \$30,000 Bequest*, "How to Tell A Story," pp. 268 ff. It is cited in this study, APPENDIX, pp. 79 f.

³ *The Prince and the Pauper*, p. 65.

⁴ *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, "About Magnanimous Incident Literature," p. 329.

Popular superstition held that ghosts assumed the exact appearance by which they were usually known in the material state. The explanation of certain "humbug" in one tale is found in this notion, for the success of an experiment in "materialization of spirits" proved to be a hoax.⁵ A folklore basis for this belief existed, and it may be believed that, as Colonel Sellers blandly remarked: "We must keep absolutely still about these materializations. . . . the negroes wouldn't stay on the place a minute."⁶ This bit of lore furnishes a suggestion concerning the origin of the phrase-expletive, "Great Caesar's ghost!" Occurring five times, with variations,⁷ it is probably a borrowing from Shakespearean lore.⁸

The same superstition accounts for the Nigger Jim's mistake in judging Tom Sawyer to be a ghost returning to the balloon:

. . . . Then he let off an awful scream, and flung his head and arms back and let off another one, because there was a white glare just then, and he had raised up his face just in time to see Tom's, as white as snow, rise above the gunnel and look him right in the eye. He thought it was Tom's ghost, you see.⁹

The same notion recurs when Mark Twain identifies the ghost of the "majestic Cardiff giant," which appeared to him as a

. . . . Thing; gradually its cloudy folds took shape—an arm appeared, then legs, then a body, and last a great sad face looked out of the vapor. Stripped of its filmy housings, naked, muscular and comely, the majestic Cardiff Giant loomed above me!¹⁰

"Nigger Jim," explaining a desert mirage, gives further expression to the superstition when he groans:

⁵ *The American Claimant*, p. 27 f.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁷ *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, p. 91: "'Caesar's ghost!'" *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 285: "'Great Caesar's ghost!'" *Ibid.*, p. 49: "'By the great Caesar's ghost, . . .'" *Tom Sawyer*, p. 226: "'great Caesar's ghost!'" *Roughing It*, I, 215: "'Ger-reat Caesar's ghost—'"

⁸ Caesar's ghost appeared to Brutus in *Julius Caesar*, IV, iii, and was recognized.

⁹ *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, p. 35.

¹⁰ *Sketches New and Old*, "A Ghost Story," p. 261. Mr. Clemens first heard goblins bearing chains (p. 260); then when he rose in bed to a sitting posture "my face came in contact with a clammy hand!" (pp. 260 f.) The apparition then became "a huge, cloudy presence before me."

" hit's a *ghos'*, dat's what it is, en I hopes to goodness we ain't gwine to see it no mo'. Dey's *been* a lake, en suthin's happened, en de lake's dead, en we's seen its *ghos'*; " ¹¹

There is the added suggestion here that ghosts of inanimate as well as animate objects exist. In English folklore, inanimate objects are seldom allowed to possess spirits, but "in Africa, beings animate and inanimate" may; so one looks "upon the few inanimate Negro ghosts as of African complexion if not of African origin." ¹² Mark Twain, in this example, reveals the primary source of his folklore.

In his observation of Mississippi River lore, Clemens gives further evidence of his acceptance of the substance-ghost. He is speaking of high-water cut-offs:

. . . . There used to be a tradition connected with it. It was said that a boat came along there in the night and went around the enormous elbow the usual way, The perplexed pilots fell to swearing, and finally uttered the entirely unnecessary wish that they might never get out of that place. . . . that particular prayer was answered, So to this day that phantom steamer is still butting around in that deserted river, trying to find her way out. . . . ¹³

Again, in late life, writing his reminiscences at Florence in January, 1904, he describes buildings "as if they might not be villas and cities at all, but the ghosts of perished ones of the remote and dim Etruscan times." ¹⁴

Particularly is it possible that a ghost's earthly things may turn to "ghost-stuff" for him. Huck does not understand this:

" How can there be a ghost-bag, Tom?"

" Whatever a ghost has, turns to ghost-stuff. They've got to have their things, like anybody else. You see, yourself, that its clothes was turned to ghost-stuff. Well, then, what's to hender its bag from turning, too? Of course it done it." ¹⁵

The boys were hunting boots which had diamonds cached in the heels, but after arguing themselves into the idea that boots and diamonds both had turned to "ghost-stuff," they deemed it wise to give up the search.

¹¹ *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, p. 68.

¹² N. N. Puckett, *Folk Beliefs of the Southern Negro*, p. 145.

¹³ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 158.

¹⁴ *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, I, 207.

¹⁵ *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, "Tom Sawyer Detective," p. 156.

" Was the ghost barefooted?"
 "No, it wasn't. What of it?"

" Didn't the breeches and goggles and whiskers and hand-bag and every blessed thing turn to ghost-stuff? Everything it had on turned, didn't it? It shows that the reason its boots turned too was because it still had them on after it started to go ha'nting around, and if that ain't proof that them blatherskites didn't get the boots, I'd like to know what you'd *call* proof." ¹⁶

"Looked like a ghost" ¹⁷ seems an innocent enough phrase; but what is the appearance of one? Catherine, the medieval French girl, says of ghosts in her house: "Tradition says that these ghosts have never been seen." ¹⁸ The transplanted Connecticut Yankee declares:

" sho! why, it's pale and noiseless—just ghosts scuffling in a fog. . . . " ¹⁹

Mark Twain compares fallen Hellenic statues in moonlight with ghosts:

. . . . It startled us, to see a stony white face stare suddenly up at us out of the grass with its dead eyes. The place seemed alive with ghosts. . . . ²⁰

The Mississippi Valley belief is set forth clearly by Mark Twain's two chief purveyors of ghostlore. Tom Sawyer, when he sees what he says is a ghost, is firm in his belief that "They're mostly dim and smoky, or like they're made out of fog," ²¹ and when he later discovers that "*You can't see the bushes through it!*" ²² it is to him convincing proof that what he has seen is not a ghost. Defining "the way a ghost does," Huck declares that they " come sliding around in a shroud, when you ain't noticing, and peep over your shoulder all of a sudden and grit their teeth." ²³

In one instance Mark Twain has described ghost-appearance in his own words:

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, "Tom Sawyer Detective," p. 159.

¹⁷ *Following the Equator*, II, 269.

¹⁸ *Joan of Arc*, I, 243.

¹⁹ *A Connecticut Yankee*, p. 122.

²⁰ *The Innocents Abroad*, II, 55.

²¹ *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, "Tom Sawyer Detective," p. 156.

²² *Ibid.*, "Tom Sawyer Detective," p. 175.

²³ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 207.

. . . . a ghostly procession of wanderers from the filmy hosts without had drifted through a chasm in the crater wall and filed round and round, and gathered and sunk and blended together till the abyss was stored to the brim with a fleecy fog. . . . ²⁴

Spirits, a quite different species of supernatural being in Mark Twain's works, may be known to be present only when the air is filled with "the rush of invisible wings," ²⁵ or simply "with invisible spirits." ²⁶ "The superstitious Samaritans" are said to believe in "fierce spirits invisible to men." ²⁷ A spirit which speaks to Mark Twain becomes visible, however, while it says, "I am unsubstantial, just as other spirits are." ²⁸

Apparitions, as their name suggests, are clearly visible:

. . . . I had seen an apparition at last, with my own eyes, in broad daylight. . . . ²⁹

He tells of another man, who "looked up, over his shoulder, and saw an apparition — a very allegory of Hunger!" ³⁰ This also occurred in midday.

Mark Twain seems to make a distinction between each of these supernatural beings, and a further distinction between them and "dead people." The latter have properties not quite akin to ghosts; a corpse in a graveyard may, for instance, "stick his skull out and say something!" ³¹

Ghosts are capable of motion:

"Lord, Tom, they're coming! They're coming, sure. What'll we do?" ³²

But how could Huck know the apparitions were "coming"? If they are dim and murky, they are also "pale and noiseless" ³³ in movement, as he suggests in his comparison:

²⁴ *Roughing It*, II, 282 f.

²⁵ *The Innocents Abroad*, II, 245.

²⁶ *The Gilded Age*, I, 20.

²⁷ *The Innocents Abroad*, II, 291.

²⁸ *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, "The Facts Concerning the Recent Carnival of Crime in Connecticut," p. 312.

²⁹ *Literary Essays*, "Mental Telegraphy," p. 136.

³⁰ *Roughing It*, II, 150.

³¹ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 207.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 83.

³³ *A Connecticut Yankee*, p. 122.

" I could only just gasp along the way you do in a dream when there's a ghost gaining on you." ³⁴

It seems, too, that there is no "sound of footfall," ³⁵ and that they have "never left a track." ³⁶ The general conception was that "faint zephyrs were caused by their passing wings," ³⁷ and that when "a faint moan came sighing through the branches of the forest and the boys felt a fleeting breath upon their cheeks" they "shuddered with the fancy that the Spirit of the Night had gone by." ³⁸ But this experience was slight compared with one in a place "full of ghosts laying for them behind everything and under the beds and shivering through the air." ³⁹

However, in his description of the ghost of the spurious Cardiff Giant, Mark Twain himself violates many principles of ghostlore:

. . . . Presently I heard a heavy footstep in my room—the step of an elephant, it seemed to me—it was not like anything human. . . . straining the floors and joists till they creaked again as it passed— In the ashes on the hearth, side by side with my own bare footprint, was another, so vast that in comparison mine was but an infant's! I heard that elephantine tread again. I noted its approach nearer and nearer, along the musty halls, The tread reached my very door and paused— ⁴⁰

Yet other qualities of this spurious ghost are acceptable:

. . . . I heard it approach the door—pass out without moving bolt or lock— found that the locks and bolts were just as I had left them, In distant parts of the building I heard the muffled slamming of doors. I heard, at intervals, stealthy foot-steps creeping in and out among the corridors, and up and down the stairs. Sometimes these noises approached my door, hesitated, and went away again. I heard the clanking of chains faintly, in remote passages, and listened while the clanking grew nearer—while it wearily climbed the stairways, marking each move by the loose surplus of chain that fell with an accented rattle upon each succeeding step as the goblin that bore it advanced. I heard muttered sentences; half-uttered screams that seemed smothered violently; and the swish of invisible garments, the rush of invisible wings. . . . ⁴¹

³⁴ *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, p. 43.

³⁵ *Following the Equator*, II, 84; *Roughing It*, II, 124.

³⁶ *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, p. 18.

³⁷ *The Gilded Age*, I, 20.

³⁸ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 144.

³⁹ *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 372.

⁴⁰ *Sketches New and Old*, "A Ghost Story," pp. 259 ff.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, "A Ghost Story," pp. 259 f.

He tells us in *Joan of Arc* of a French tradition that the old ghosts "have merely been heard,"⁴² and in his autobiography uses the expression, "hardly a ghost of a whisper."⁴³ In *Tom Sawyer* he mentions the fact that at midnight, "Spirits whispered in the rustling leaves."⁴⁴ It is late at night, when "out of the stillness, little, scarcely perceptible noises" begin "to emphasize themselves," that one thinks of the spirits. Then, "The ticking of the clock began to bring itself into notice. Old beams began to crack mysteriously. The stairs creaked faintly. Evidently spirits were abroad."⁴⁵

Sounds were of importance in recognizing inanimate ghosts. The legendary stranded boat described in *Life on the Mississippi*⁴⁶ was to be located by the "muffled cough of her scap-pipes and the plaintive cry of her leadsmen,"⁴⁷ and Mark Twain muses:

.... a [spinning] wheel whose rising and falling wail, heard from a distance, filled my atmosphere with the wandering spirits of the dead;⁴⁸

But there are other ghost noises:

.... away out in the woods I heard that kind of a sound that a ghost makes when it wants to tell about something that's on its mind and can't make itself understood, and so can't rest easy in its grave, and has to go about that way every night grieving.⁴⁹

This is what Huck tells; and again on down the river he says of a noise:

.... it made you feel crawly; it was like spirits carrying on that way in the air. Jim said he believed it was spirits; but I says:

"No; spirits wouldn't say, 'Dern the dern fog.'" ⁵⁰

A man trailed for crime to a western mining camp complains that spirits

⁴² *Joan of Arc*, I, 243.

⁴³ *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, II, 196.

⁴⁴ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 206.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁴⁶ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 158.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

⁴⁸ *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, I, 102 f.

⁴⁹ *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 4.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

" were always whispering around my bed and plotting against me, and it broke my sleep."

"They all agreed, and whispered, and jibbered with joy. . . . " ⁵¹

In *Huckleberry Finn* speech is attributed to a corpse: ". . . . the dead man says ther's six thous'n dollars." ⁵² A warrior paddling by Maiden's Rock may hear "the soft sweet music of long-departed Winona, darling of Indian song and story," which "romantic superstition has invested with a voice." ⁵³

Some ghost noises are attributed to "restless" spirits. One night in the graveyard Tom and Huck, Mark Twain's most frequent spokesmen of superstition, felt the presence of spirits:

A faint wind moaned through the trees and Tom feared it might be the spirits of the dead, complaining of being disturbed. The boys talked little, and only under their breath, for the time and the place and the pervading solemnity and silence oppressed their spirits. . . . ⁵⁴

The author carries this notion, together with the thought of "laying the ghost," back into medieval France:

. . . . the ghosts of their house had been a dread and a misery to them and their forebears for generations, and nobody had ever been found yet who was willing to confront them and find out what their trouble was, so that the family could heal it and content the poor specters and beguile them into tranquillity and peace. ⁵⁵

Even then, the story is, it was considered "no proper shame to be afraid of ghosts, seeing how helpless the living are in their hands." ⁵⁶ The translator of the Joan narrative and his companions determined to remain in the haunted chamber at night in order to "lay the ghost":

At last, faint and far and weird and slow, came a . . . distant bell tolling midnight. . . .

One minute—two minutes—three minutes of this, and then we heard a long deep groan, and everybody sprang up and stood, with

⁵¹ *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg*, "A Double Barreled Detective Story," p. 353.

⁵² *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 231.

⁵³ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 480.

⁵⁴ *Tom Sawyer*, pp. 81 f.

⁵⁵ *Joan of Arc*, I, 233.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 243 f.

his legs quaking. . . . There was a pause, then we heard muffled sobbings, mixed with pitiful ejaculations. Then there was a second voice, low and not distinct, and the one seemed trying to comfort the other; and so the two voices went on, with moanings, and soft sobbings, and, ah, the tones were so full of compassion and sorrow and despair!⁵⁷

Those ghost noises came from "that little dungeon" that had been walled up.⁵⁸ The inference here is one explained in *Tom Sawyer* by a conversation between the boys. According to Huck, ghosts "haunt" the place of death, unless money is involved:

" Injun Joe's ghost is round about there, certain."

"No it ain't, Huck, no it ain't. It would ha'n't the place where he died—away out at the mouth of the cave—five mile from here."

"No, Tom, it wouldn't. It would hang round the money. I know the way of ghosts, and so do you."

Tom began to fear that Huck was right. Misgivings gathered in his mind. But presently an idea occurred to him—

"Looky here, Huck, what fools we're making of ourselves! Injun Joe's ghost ain't a-going to come around where there's a cross!"⁵⁹

Tom "knows about ghosts," as Huck says, but is never at any time fond of them. He says of the sarcophagus in a pyramid:

" But I didn't take no interest in the place, because there could be ghosts there, of course; not fresh ones, but I don't like no kind."⁶⁰

In *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, a medieval contemporary speaks of Gawaine's ghost to "The Boss":

" Gawaine—Gawaine's head is at Dover Castle, he fell in the fight there—Gawaine appeared to Arthur in a dream, at least his ghost did, and warned him to refrain from conflict"⁶¹

This item, although procured by Clemens at second-hand, illustrates the aforementioned belief that a ghost's residence will be near the dead body from which it originally came.

Midnight was the hour of release for Mississippi Valley ghosts as well as for those of ancient France; it was out of the question for them to appear in the daytime:

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 244.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 244.

⁵⁹ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 275.

⁶⁰ *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, p. 115.

⁶¹ *A Connecticut Yankee*, p. 417.

"No, sir, they don't ever come out only at night—and then not till after twelve. . . . " ⁶²

The fact that a certain shade seemed to violate this rule was Tom's clue that what he and Huck had taken for a ghost was but a ghost-impersonation:

"Huck, there's something mighty curious about this one, don't you know? It oughtn't to be going around in the daytime."

"That's so, Tom—I never heard the like of it before."

" . . . There's something wrong about this one, now you mark my words. I don't believe it's got any right to be around in the daytime. . . . "

"It ain't a ghost at all. . . . " ⁶³

Knowledge of the "midnight release" quieted the boys' minds one night when they were planning an excursion to the local graveyard. They were not afraid to go early one Saturday evening, and after midnight it would be Sunday:

" . . . I reckon they'll come after old Hoss Williams to-night."

"But they buried him Saturday. Didn't they get him Saturday night?"

"Why, how you talk! How could their charms work till midnight?—and then it's Sunday. Devils don't slosh around much of a Sunday, I don't reckon."

"I never thought of that. That's so. . . . " ⁶⁴

The strength of this belief is indicated by their lack of fear:

" . . . Lemme go with you?"

"Of course—if you ain't afeard."

"Afeard! 'Tain't likely. . . . " ⁶⁵

The "Nigger Jim," supreme Negro exponent of Mark Twain's folklore, knows exactly how to treat ghosts. He even orders a "ha'nt" originally feared, back to its *locale*:

. . . he drops down on his knees, and puts his hands together and says:

"Doan' hurt me—don't! I hain't ever done no harm to a ghos'. I alwuz liked dead people, en done all I could for 'em. You go en git in de river ag'in, whah you b'longs, en doan' do nuffn to Ole Jim, 'at 'uz alwuz yo' fren'." ⁶⁶

⁶² *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, "Tom Sawyer Detective," p. 174.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, "Tom Sawyer Detective," p. 174 f.

⁶⁴ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 59.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

⁶⁶ *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 58.

Jim argues with a second ghost that appears to him:

"I hain't ever done you no harm. You know that. So, then, what you want to come back and ha'nt *me* for?"⁶⁷

Jim knew that the best way to keep ghosts from "ha'nting" him was to avoid curious discussion of the dead, particularly when a corpse had not been buried. Huck learned from him:

. . . . I wanted to talk about the dead man and guess out how he come to be killed, but Jim didn't want to. . . . he said, he might come and ha'nt us; he said a man that warn't buried was more likely to go a ha'nting around than one that was planted and comfortable. . . .⁶⁸

But even before this the boys had been shy in the presence of dead people. In graveyards they had a vague fear of getting into some sort of trouble:

"Tom, I don't like to fool around much where there's dead people. A body's bound to get into trouble with 'em, sure."

"I don't like to stir 'em up, either. . . ."⁶⁹

Sudden respect, arising from their fear of spirits, also appears in their speech about the dead:

"Hucky, do you believe the dead people like it for us to be here?"

Huckleberry whispered:

"I wisht I knowed. It's awful solemn like, *ain't* it?"

"Say, Hucky—do you reckon Hoss Williams hears us talking?"

"O' course he does. Least his sperrit does."

Tom, after a pause:

"I wish I'd said *Mister* Williams. But I never meant any harm. Everybody calls him Hoss."

"A body can't be too partic'lar how they talk 'bout these yer dead people, Tom."⁷⁰

Tom is nearly always less superstitious than Huck. When the boys see "devil-fire" coming, he exclaims reassuringly:

"Oh, don't be afeard. I don't believe they'll bother us. We ain't doing any harm. . . ."⁷¹

Huck disapproves of free-and-easy rejection of certain traditional beliefs about ghosts. A soliloquy reveals his personal belief in "vengeful" spirits. When Tom scoffs at

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 312.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

⁶⁹ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 207.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

one of Jim's pronouncements and at Huck's defense of the old Negro, calling both of them "ignorant superstitious blatherskites," Huck goes off muttering darkly:

. . . . Yes, and he'll git come up with, one of these days, I says to myself, insulting ghosts that way. They'll stand it for a while, maybe, but they won't stand it always, for anybody that knows about ghosts knows how easy they are hurt, and how revengeful they are.⁷²

Popular thought of the day had it that these supernatural creatures were endowed with the highest order of intelligence and cleverness in carrying out their designs:

" . . . Why, *sperits* couldn't 'a' done better and been no smarter. And I reckon they must 'a' *been* sperits— . . . " ⁷³

In the tenebrous dusk of the graveyard, the boys fearfully recalled that "they [spirits] can see in the dark, same as cats." ⁷⁴

To modern minds the spirits may seem inconsistent in hovering about graveyards, for one may presume there would have been in almost every village "burying ground," a cross of some sort. And ghosts "'ain't a-going to come around where there's a cross!" ⁷⁵ This belief is so deeply fixed in the minds of Tom and Huck that they dismiss all fear in hunting a box of money which otherwise they would have considered haunted:

"Looky here, Huck, what fools we're making of ourselves! Injun Joe's ghost ain't a-going to come around where there's a cross!"

The point was well taken. It had its effect

"Tom, I didn't think of that. But that's so. It's luck for us, that cross is, I reckon we'll climb down there and have a hunt for that box." ⁷⁶

Hunting of treasure-trove must be governed by certain "old traditions," as Tom explained to Huck:

" You got to find out where the shadow of the limb falls at midnight, and that's where you dig!"

⁷² *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, p. 69.

⁷³ *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 388.

⁷⁴ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 83.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 275.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 275.

The boys were there that night, about the appointed time. They sat in the shadow waiting. It was . . . an hour made solemn by old traditions. . . . By and by they judged that twelve had come; they marked where the shadow fell, and began to dig. . . .

"Well, but we *can't* be wrong. We spotted the shadder to a dot."

"I know it, but then there's another thing. . . . Why, we only guessed at the time. Like enough it was too late or too early."

Huck dropped his shovel.

"That's it," said he. "That's the very trouble. We've got to give this one up. We can't ever tell the right time," ⁷⁷

Tom knew, too, that "They always bury it [hidden treasure] under a ha'nted house," ⁷⁸ but, more definitely, "mostly under the floor in ha'nted houses." ⁷⁹ Ordinarily Tom and Huck would not venture near one of these structures, except in broad daylight:

" . . . They [ha'nts] won't hender us from digging there in the daytime."

"Well, that's so. But you know mighty well people don't go about that ha'nted house in the day nor the night." ⁸⁰

The primary reason for avoidance of haunted houses is that someone has been murdered in them, and everyone stays away, "mostly because they don't like to go where a man's been murdered, anyway." ⁸¹ The boys themselves concur in this superstition, and usually "give the haunted house a wide berth" ⁸² when their footsteps have taken them in that direction.

After the boys' discovery of treasure in a haunted house had become known, however, superstitions about these structures must have been largely discredited, for

. . . Every "haunted" house in St. Petersburg and the neighboring villages was dissected, plank by plank, and its foundations dug up and ransacked for hidden treasure—and not by boys, but men—pretty grave, unromantic men, too, some of them. . . . ⁸³

The deserted yard surrounding one haunted house provided

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 205 f.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 207 f.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 208.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

a duelling ground *par excellence* in *Pudd'nhead Wilson*,⁸⁴ while at the same time the house was a "roostin'" place for Roxy, when she could not "'ford to roos' nowhers' else."⁸⁵ Mark Twain describes it as

. . . . a two-story log house which had acquired the reputation a few years before of being haunted, and that was the end of its usefulness. Nobody would live in it afterward, or go near it by night, and most people even gave it a wide berth in the daytime. As it had no competition, it was called *the* haunted house. It was getting crazy and ruinous now from long neglect. . . . It was the last house in the town at that end.⁸⁶

But even Roxy did not stay there regularly; instead, she "would call at the haunted house once a month for her money,"⁸⁷ and to see her son, who "was always at the haunted house to have a chat with her on these occasions. Every now and then she paid him a visit there on between-days also."⁸⁸ She had previously asked him: "Is you 'feared o' de ha'nted house?" But he—just informed of his Negro blood—was hesitant in his reply: "N-no."⁸⁹ Later, however, he made this rendezvous a sort of base for thieving operations, and once "arrived at the haunted house in disguise,"⁹⁰ later hurrying back to it "by the obscurest route he knew."⁹¹

French ghosts in *Joan of Arc* haunted a room in a big house with very thick walls. The place "had been left unoccupied for nobody knew how many years, because of its evil repute."⁹² But inside the large room it was plain that

. . . . the wall at this end was built in some bygone time to make and fence off a narrow room there. There is no communication anywhere with that narrow room, and if it exists— . . . it has no light and no air, but is an absolute dungeon. . . .⁹³

⁸⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 270: "The Judge and his second found the rest of the war party at the further end of the vacant ground, near the haunted house." *Ibid.*, p. 271: "He placed the Judge sixty feet from the haunted house and facing it; . . . the twins within fifteen feet of the house."

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 69 f.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

⁹² *Joan of Arc*, I, 242 f.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, I, 243.

From that space the noises came, but when it was broken into:

Nothing there but vacancy! On the floor lay a rusty sword and a rotten fan.⁹⁴

Tom and Huck explored "the old ha'nted house up the Still-House branch," and found that

. . . . there was something so weird and grisly about the dead silence that reigned there under the baking sun, and something so depressing about the loneliness and desolation of the place, that they were afraid, for a moment, to venture in. Then they crept to the door and took a trembling peep. They saw a weed-grown, floorless room, unplastered, an ancient fireplace, vacant windows, a ruinous staircase, and here, there, and everywhere hung ragged and abandoned cobwebs.⁹⁵

"De sta'r-steps is broke down" in Roxy's and Tom Driscoll's meeting place⁹⁶; this seems a common feature of haunted houses. "Dust and cobwebs,"⁹⁷ too, seem necessary to create the authentic atmosphere of an haunted house. In the old French room

. . . . The dusty cobwebs under the ceiling had the look of not having had any business for a century.⁹⁸

Apparently this particular haunt was of such potency and antiquity that even the spiders had departed!

Tom Sawyer had his superstitions, but at times, as has been previously noted, he distrusted certain of the popular beliefs. He suspected, for instance, that the house on the branch was not haunted:

". . . . nothing's ever been seen around that house except in the night—just some blue lights slipping by the windows—no regular ghosts."

To Huck the blue lights were definite proof of haunts:

"Well, where you see one of them blue lights flickering around, Tom, you can bet there's a ghost mighty close behind it. It stands to reason. Becuz *you* know that they don't anybody but ghosts use 'em."

"Yes, that's so." ⁹⁹

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 245.

⁹⁵ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 211.

⁹⁶ *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, p. 68.

⁹⁷ *Sketches New and Old*, "A Ghost Story," p. 257.

⁹⁸ *Joan of Arc*, I, 243.

⁹⁹ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 208.

Mark Twain implants this superstition in Eve—theoretically before there could be ghosts—when she was trying to bore a hole in one stick with another:

. . . . A thin, transparent bluish film rose out of the hole, and I dropped everything and ran! I thought it was a spirit, and I was so frightened! But I looked back, and it was not coming; 100

In *Life on the Mississippi* the “faint glow of the specter steamer’s lights” had been seen, it was said, “drifting through the distant gloom.”¹⁰¹ The “spirit light” phenomenon is described more fully in a “ghost story” frankly designated as such:

. . . . Three little spheres of soft phosphorescent light appeared on the ceiling directly over my head, clung and glowed there a moment, and then dropped—two of them upon my face and one upon the pillow. . . . 102

Next they went through a mysterious metamorphosis:

. . . . They spattered, liquidly, and felt warm. Intuition told me they had turned to gouty of blood as they fell—I needed no light to satisfy myself of that. . . . 103

Immediately afterward, Mr. Clemens saw “pallid faces, dimly luminous, and white uplifted hands, floating bodiless in the air.”¹⁰⁴ Shakingly he lit the gas, but the “broad gas-flame” soon “dwindled to a sickly blue, and all things about me lay in a spectral twilight. . . . A pale glow stole over the Thing.”¹⁰⁵

There was a mysterious room in the tavern of the town in which Tom and Huck lived and

. . . . The tavern-keeper’s young son had made the most of the mystery by entertaining himself with the idea that that room was “ha’nted”, had noticed that there was a light in there the night before.¹⁰⁶

The boys, speculating about possibilities of treasure-trove in the haunted house, worked themselves to such a pitch that

¹⁰⁰ *The \$30,000 Bequest*, “Eve’s Diary,” p. 369

¹⁰¹ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 158.

¹⁰² *Sketches New and Old*, “A Ghost Story,” p. 260.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, “A Ghost Story,” p. 260.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, “A Ghost Story,” p. 260.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, “A Ghost Story,” p. 261.

¹⁰⁶ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 222.

they were "half expecting to see a blue light flit past a window."¹⁰⁷

In one of his volumes of rambling travel-essays Mark Twain suggests the theory that the spirit-light superstition may have a physical explanation:

.... On damp, murky nights, these scattered skeletons gave forth a soft, hideous glow, like very faint spots of moonlight starring the vague desert. It was because of the phosphorus in the bones. But no scientific explanation could keep a body from shivering when he drifted by one of those ghostly lights and knew that a skull held it.¹⁰⁸

One of his ghost stories tells of the pursuit of a raft by an haunted barrel:

".... And every time the lightning come, there was that bar'l, with the blue lights winking around it. "¹⁰⁹

Mark Twain sets this before the reader as an authentic tale, told in the course of a night's talk on a raft. The crew of the raft, coarse rivermen, had been talking of other subjects, but

.... from that they went into ghosts and told about a lot that other folks had seen; but Ed says:

"Why don't you tell something that you've seen yourselves? Now let me have a say. Five years ago I was on a raft as big as this, "¹¹⁰

There followed the story of the haunted barrel.¹¹¹ "Ed" and a Dick Allbright had noticed a speck on the river in the distance; it gained on the raft, and Dick said: "I've seen it before; lots has seen it; they says it's a ha'nted bar'l."¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

¹⁰⁸ *Roughing It*, I, 88.

¹⁰⁹ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 26.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹¹¹ The whole passage is an incidental inclusion of the author's, "By way of illustrating keelboat talk and manners." (*Life on the Mississippi*, p. 19.) Mark Twain says it is "a chapter from a book which I have been working at, by fits and starts, during the past five or six years, and may possibly finish in the course of five or six more. The book is a story which details some passages in the life of an ignorant village boy, Huck Finn, son of the town drunkard of my time out West, there." Inasmuch as the general situation is one reproduced in *Huckleberry Finn*, it may be assumed that it is this book of which he is speaking. The episode does not appear in any other volume of his narratives, however, than *Life on the Mississippi*.

¹¹² *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 25.

It took up a position abreast of the raft, and floated there. Soon a storm came on, and one of the crew sprained his ankle. "Toward dawn" the barrel disappeared. The next night it came at about half past nine; another man tripped and sprained his ankle; toward day it left. Again it came the next night, bringing a second storm. This time lightning killed two men, and two were crippled by spraining their ankles! Toward dawn, as usual, the barrel went away during a dark interlude between lightnings. The next morning, everyone on the raft was watching, and

. . . . Down she comes, slow and steady, and settles into her old tracks. You could 'a' heard a pin drop. Then up comes the captain, and says:

"Boys, don't be a pack of children and fools; I don't want this bar'l to be dogging us all the way to Orleans, and *you* don't: Well, then, how's the best way to stop it? Burn it up—that's the way. I'm going to fetch it aboard," he says. And before anybody could say a word, in he went.

He swum to it, and as he come pushing it to the raft, the men spread to one side. But the old man got it aboard and busted in the head, and there was a baby in it! Yes, sir; a stark-naked baby. It was Dick Allbright's baby; he owned up and said so.

"Yes," he says, a-leaning over it, "yes, it is my own lamented darling, my poor lost Charles William Allbright deceased," says he—for he could curl his tongue around the bulliest words in the language when he was a mind to, and lay them before you without a jint started anywheres. Yes, he said, he used to live up at the head of this bend, and one night he choked his child, which was crying, not intending to kill it—which was prob'ly a lie—and then he was scared, and buried it in a bar'l, before his wife got home, and off he went, and struck the northern trail and went to rafting; and this was the third year that the bar'l had chased him. He said the bad luck always begun light, and lasted till four men was killed, and then the bar'l didn't come any more after that.¹¹³

Invariably it was on the third appearance of the "bar'l" that death came; and according to "Nigger Jim" this was the regular belief about all ghosts:

"She's dah ag'in, Mars Tom, she's dah ag'in, en I knows I's gwine to die, 'case when a body sees a ghos' de third time, dat's what it means."¹¹⁴

Jim had seen the ghost of the lake "twiste" before this

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

¹¹⁴ *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, p. 69.

time, "'en dat's proof" of its existence, he said.¹¹⁵ Huck Finn corroborated Jim's statement:

He wouldn't look no more, and what he said made me afraid, too, because I knowed it was true, for that has always been the way with ghosts; so then I wouldn't look any more, either.
....¹¹⁶

In an autobiographical passage in one of his works Mark Twain relates an incident which illustrates vividly the degree of belief placed in ghosts when he was a boy:

.... I was a small boy at the time; and I saw those giddy young ladies come tiptoeing into the room where Miss _____ sat reading at midnight by a lamp. The girl at the head of the file wore a shroud and a doughface; she crept behind the victim, touched her on the shoulder, and she looked up and screamed, and then fell into convulsions. She did not recover from the fright, but went mad. In these days it seems incredible that people believed in ghosts so short a time ago. But they did.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

¹¹⁷ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 433.

III DEMONOLOGY

That Mark Twain's writings are replete with autobiographical matter is evident from even a cursory examination. The Hawkins family's "lagging dragging journey" out of Tennessee is a close parallel, surely, of his own family's emigration; and a passage from *The Gilded Age* which details the Hawkins removal, may well provide an introduction to the study of Mark Twain's devil lore:

... it was a wonder and delight to the children, a world of enchantment; and they believed it to be peopled with the mysterious dwarfs and giants and goblins that figured in the tales the negro slaves were in the habit of telling them nightly by the shuddering light of the kitchen fire.¹

The Mardi-Gras, famous New Orleans festival, incorporates in its revels creatures from the traditional demonology of the Southland. Mark Twain describes the festival as

... of course a relic of the French and Spanish occupation; but I judge that the religious feature has been pretty well knocked out of it now. ... medieval business, supplemented by the monsters and the oddities, and the pleasant creatures from fairyland, ...²

has replaced the "reveling rabble" of the priest's promotion. Mark Twain speaks particularly of the procession of "the Mystic Crew of Comus," which included "all manner of giants, dwarfs, monstrosities, and other diverting grotesquerie."³

The traditionary "devil" of superstition is believed to be able to assume any desired form. May this not account for the variety of hobgoblins? In a rather personal essay-sketch, Mark Twain declared:

"... If my most pitiless enemy could appear before me at this moment, I would freely right any wrong I may have done him."

Straightway the door opened, and a shriveled, shabby dwarf entered. He was not more than two feet high. He seemed to be about forty years old. Every feature and every inch of him was a trifle out of shape; and so, while one could not put his finger upon any particular part and say, "This is a conspicuous deformity," the spectator perceived that this little person was a

¹ *The Gilded Age*, I, 19.

² *Life on the Mississippi*, pp. 373 f.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 373.

deformity as a whole—a vague, general, evenly blended, nicely adjusted deformity. There was a fox-like cunning in the face and the sharp little eyes, and also alertness and malice. . . . ⁴

Mark Twain adds one distinctly Continental characteristic to the dwarf he is presenting:

. . . . One thing about him struck me forcibly and most unpleasantly: he was covered all over with a fuzzy, greenish mold, such as one sometimes sees upon mildewed bread. The sight of it was nauseating.⁵

This creature turns out to be the author's Conscience, materialized, but soon loses significance as folklore, for later appearances show him to have been created solely for purposes of the narrative.

In an earlier century, so another tale unfolds, the false prince, Tom Canty, dreamed that he was playing alone

. . . . when a dwarf, only a foot high, with long red whiskers and a humped back, appeared to him suddenly and said, "Dig, by that stump." He did so, and found twelve bright new pennies—wonderful riches! Yet this was not the best of it; for the dwarf said:

"I know thee. Thou art a good lad and deserving; thy distresses shall end, for the day of thy reward is come. Dig here every seventh day, and thou shalt find always the same treasure, twelve bright new pennies. Tell none—keep the secret."

Then the dwarf vanished, ⁶

The dwarf form is merely one of many supernatural shapes assumed by demons. In *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, "the masters of the castle" who held medieval princesses in confinement were:

. . . . three stupendous brothers, each with four arms and one eye—the eye in the center of the forehead, and as big as a fruit. . . . ⁷

But it was "usually a giant"⁸ who held the fair damsels within his castle walls.

A still more fanciful creature than any of these is found in *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc* in the form of a forest denizen whose origin is almost indistinguishable in the mists of antiquity:

⁴ *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, "The Facts Concerning the Recent Carnival of Crime in Connecticut," pp. 303 f.

⁵ *Ibid.*, "The Facts Concerning the Recent Carnival of Crime in Connecticut," p. 304.

⁶ *The Prince and the Pauper*, p. 98.

⁷ *A Connecticut Yankee*, pp. 82 f.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

. . . . in still earlier times prodigious dragons that spouted fire and poisonous vapors from their nostrils had their homes in there. In fact, one was still living in there in our own time. It was as long as a tree, and had a body as big around as a tierce, and scales like overlapping great tiles, and deep ruby eyes as large as a cavalier's hat, and an anchor-fluke on its tail as big as I don't know what, but very big, even unusually so for a dragon, as everybody said who knew about dragons. It was thought that this dragon was of a brilliant blue color, with gold mottlings, but no one had ever seen it, therefore this was not known to be so, it was only an opinion. . . . As to that dragon, I always held the belief that its color was gold and without blue, for that has always been the color of dragons. That this dragon lay but a little way within the wood at one time is shown by the fact that Pierre Morel was in there one day and smelt it, and recognized it by the smell. . . . ⁹

This dragon was the "deadliest danger" known, and the narrator, supposedly an aged French nobleman telling of his youth, tells how the forest was rid of it:

In the earliest times a hundred knights from many remote places in the earth would have gone in there one after another, to kill the dragon and get the reward, but in our time that method had gone out, and the priest had become the one that abolished dragons. Père Guillaume Fronte did it in this case. He had a procession, with candles and incense and banners, and marched around the edge of the wood and exorcised the dragon, and it was never heard of again, although it was the opinion of many that the smell never wholly passed away. . . . I know that the creature was there before the exorcism, but whether it was there afterward or not is a thing which I cannot be so positive about.¹⁰

Each of these instances, although not restricted in locality to the Mississippi Valley nor to one period of time, shows Mark Twain's interest in demonology. That he went to sources, even before writing *Life on the Mississippi* (a river with which he was already intimately familiar through two decades as a steamboat pilot), is worthy of note, and indicative of the degree of authenticity which may be ascribed to his citations. From "one of the quaint chronicles" of early times he learns that Marquette, exploring,

. . . . had been warned by the Indians that . . . the river contained a demon "whose roar could be heard at a great distance, and who would engulf them in the abyss where he dwelt." . . . he had a fair right to think the river's roaring demon was come.¹¹

The ridicule of legend and superstition discernible in all

⁹ *Joan of Arc*, I, 7 f.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, I, 8 f.

¹¹ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 11.

Mark Twain's works is instanced here by the appearance of a monster catfish as the demon, and the fact that the explorers were warned "that the river Indians were as ferocious and pitiless as the river demon,"¹² — in other words, "as a catfish."

He quotes Marryat, a writer of 1837, on the demoniac aspect of the Mississippi:

" It is a river of desolation; you imagine it a devil, whose energies have been only overcome by the wonderful power of steam."¹³

The belief that devils may assume any desired form is further illustrated by the passage in *Joan of Arc* which tells of Cauchon's purpose in trying Joan — to "make it appear that these were no saints to whom she had done reverence, but devils in disguise."¹⁴ The general conception of "devils" is definitely allied with religious superstition in an earlier passage of the same work:

He had Satan in his mind, you see; and was hoping, perhaps, that by and by it could be shown that she had rendered homage to the arch enemy of God and man.¹⁵

Even the judges, Joan's enemies, had difficulty in fixing the responsibility, for they asked:

" How can you know that her Voices are not of Satan, and she his mouthpiece?—for does not Satan know the secrets of men and use his knowledge for the destruction of their souls? "¹⁶

A commission was appointed to "visit and question Joan daily until they should find out whether her supernatural helps hailed from heaven or from hell,"¹⁷ or, "to prove," as Mark Twain says in a fragmentary and preliminary essay on the Maid of Orleans, "that she *was* commissioned of God and not of Satan."¹⁸

When the trial was concluded and Joan convicted, it was realized that the "King had gotten his crown by the hands

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 228.

¹⁴ *Joan of Arc*, II, 184.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, II, 146.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 157.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 157.

¹⁸ *Literary Essays*, "Saint Joan of Arc," p. 365.

of a person proven by the priests to have been in league with Satan and burned for it by them as a sorceress." ¹⁹ Here again the intertwining of demonology and witchcraft is evident.

Joan's affiliation with the devil had long been recognized by the English. Their soldiery was "in a demoralized condition of superstitious terror; they had become satisfied that the Maid was in league with Satan." ²⁰ This belief, which became current early in her battle career, was soon exaggerated to the certainty

.... that that creature was not mortal, but the very child of Satan, It was said also that some of the officers were affected by the same superstitious fears. ²¹

In a reference to the migration of alligators in the Mississippi, a trace of the old idea that devils are present in animals may be observed:

".... the devils have swapped around so," ²²

The application of the term "devil" to a human being is an obvious survival of the belief that devils might incarnate themselves in earthly persons to achieve their ends. Examples of such application are numerous in Mark Twain:

".... that murderin' half-breed! I'd druther they was devils a dern sight." ²³

".... I've had dreams enough all night—with that patch-eyed Spanish devil going for me all through 'em—rot him!" ²⁴

".... and I come before daylight becuz I didn't want to run acrost them devils, even if they was dead." ²⁵

.... "Here is a proud devil!" thought I; "here is a limb of Satan that would rather send us all to destruction" ²⁶

".... She's pure devil, that girl." ²⁷

The "poor devil" epithet is most common:

.... Yet, poor devil, ²⁸

".... Every time a poor devil has been set upon his feet" ²⁹

¹⁹ *Joan of Arc*, II, 286.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, I, 196.

²¹ *Ibid.*, I, 227.

²² *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 202.

²³ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 84.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 240.

²⁶ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 67.

²⁷ *The Gilded Age*, II, 159.

²⁸ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 411.

²⁹ *A Tramp Abroad*, II, 287.

"He went away filled with fright and gratitude, poor devil!
 " ³⁰

Or, the expression may be: "It was that devil Tom." ³¹ Or, an Irishwoman may expostulate about a coffin "to ship that dhrunken divil to Purgatory in." ³² The thought may even be so horrible that the only adequate expression is:

Why, this man was born a devil; ³³

A passage in *The Gilded Age* suggests personal metamorphosis into devil-form:

" Ruth, do you believe a woman ever becomes a devil?"

"Men do, and I don't know why women shouldn't. But I never saw one."

"Well, Laura Hawkins comes very near it. . . . " ³⁴

Again:

"He must be the devil!"

"More than one has thought it. . . . " ³⁵

The "nigger trader" was loathed by everybody. He was regarded as a sort of human devil who bought and conveyed poor helpless creatures to hell—for to our whites and blacks alike the Southern plantation was simply hell; no milder name could describe it. . . . ³⁶

It is significant that Mark Twain draws on demonology for this vehement statement.

A special type of devil appearance, not likely to be experienced frequently in these days, is described by Huckleberry Finn. He tells of his "pap" in delirium tremens:

. . . . screaming and saying there was devils a-hold of him.
 ³⁷

One propensity of the devil, that of allying human beings with himself, is quite clear from several references. Injun Joe was lying about a murder, and Tom and Huck were

. . . . expecting every moment that the clear sky would deliver God's lightnings upon his head, and wondering to see how long the stroke was delayed. And when he had finished and still stood alive and whole, their wavering impulse to break their oath and

³⁰ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 273.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 351.

³³ *Joan of Arc*, II, 199.

³⁴ *The Gilded Age*, II, 172.

³⁵ *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg*, "A Double-Barreled Detective Story," p. 318.

³⁶ *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, I, 124.

³⁷ *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 40.

save the poor betrayed prisoner's life faded and vanished away, for plainly this miscreant had sold himself to Satan and it would be fatal to meddle with the property of such a power as that.³⁸

A little later, when the half-breed Injun Joe perjured himself under oath with impunity, the boys regarded their belief as indisputably confirmed:

Injun Joe repeated his statement, just as calmly, a few minutes afterward on the inquest, under oath; and the boys, seeing that the lightnings were still withheld, were confirmed in their belief that Joe had sold himself to the devil. He was now become, to them, the most balefully interesting object they had ever looked upon, and they could not take their fascinated eyes from his face.

They inwardly resolved to watch him, nights, when opportunity should offer, in the hope of getting a glimpse of his dread master.³⁹

That this belief was no manufactured superstition to suit the narrative, but an actuality, is attested by Mark Twain's repetition of the incident, thunderings and lightnings included, in his autobiography:

. . . . By my teachings I perfectly well knew what all the wild rumpus was for—Satan had come to get Injun Joe. I had no shadow of a doubt about it. It was the proper thing when a person like Injun Joe was required in the under world, and I should have thought it strange and unaccountable if Satan had come for him in a less spectacular way. . . .

But in the morning I saw that it was a false alarm and concluded to resume business at the old stand and wait for another reminder.⁴⁰

In *The Prince and the Pauper* a legal problem involving devils arises during the trial of a woman and child:

" They sold themselves to the devil—such is their crime."

" The *devil* may buy a child, if he so choose, and the child agree thereto, but not an Englishman—in this latter case the contract would be null and void."⁴¹

Mark Twain, in a tale of his silver-mining days, mentions a visiting journalist and story-teller who enlivened one of his tales with a character,

. . . . a mysterious Roscicrucian who transmuted metals, held consultations with the devil in a cave at dead of night, and cast the horoscope of the several heroes and heroines⁴²

³⁸ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 100.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

⁴⁰ *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, II, 176.

⁴¹ *The Prince and the Pauper*, pp. 122 f.

⁴² *Roughing It*, II, 77.

In a later chapter of the tale, the journalist "created a misunderstanding between the devil and the Roscicrucian,"⁴³ and finally "opened the earth and let the Roscicrucian through, accompanied with the accustomed smoke and thunder and smell of brimstone."⁴⁴

In *A Tramp Abroad*, a man declines to take a foolhardy risk with the remark:

" Excuse me, there are a great many pleasanter roads to the devil than that."⁴⁵

That the general conception of the devil's kingdom in Mark Twain is concurrent with the fire-and-brimstone idea, is indicated by the references, "to burn wid Satan"⁴⁶ and

" so ye wander not out of his grace the Devil's sultry realm."⁴⁷

Mr. Clemens accepted, at least for narrative purposes, the "fallen angel" theory in the passage:

. . . . And he has fallen like Lucifer, never to rise again.
⁴⁸

Objects once in hell are plainly branded:

"You will never see them again—they are destroyed. They came from Satan. I saw the hell-brand on them, and I knew they were sent to betray me to sin."⁴⁹

In *Roughing It* Brigham Young pronounces Rigdon's "prophecies" to be "emanations from the devil,"⁵⁰ but immediately afterward sentences him to the "buffetings of Satan for a thousand years"⁵¹ implying thereby that Rigdon's punishment may be less severe than he deserves. Mr. Clemens is sly in introducing these subtle inconsistencies which are often greater sources of delight in his work than the obviously humorous passages.

Of devil-habits there is only the intimation found in Huck's remark:

⁴³ *Ibid.*, II, 79.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 79.

⁴⁵ *A Tramp Abroad*, II, 129.

⁴⁶ *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, p. 22.

⁴⁷ *A Connecticut Yankee*, p. 377.

⁴⁸ *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg*, "My Boyhood Dreams," p. 257.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

⁵⁰ *Roughing It*, II, 306.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, II, 306.

" Devils don't slosh around much of a Sunday, I don't reckon." ⁵²

For that reason he and Tom felt secure in visiting the graveyard on Saturday evening before midnight. They were safe until dead midnight any day of the week, but were safe all Saturday night. However, when they see *three* figures approaching, and judge them to be devils, their feeling of security vanishes:

" Three of 'em! Lordy, Tom, we're goners! " ⁵³

A further insight into Mark Twain's youthful belief in devils is obtained from his narration of an experience with a lunatic, who would have killed him

. . . . unless I acknowledged him to be the only son of the Devil.
 I must say he was the sole and only son of the Devil—
 ⁵⁴

Throughout his volumes are instances of oaths in which the devil is named, as:

"Shut up, in the devil's name!" ⁵⁵

"Explain, thou limb of Satan, " ⁵⁶

There are degrees in swearing by the devil:

"Thousand devils!" screamed Cauchon, ⁵⁷

"Fifteen hundred devils!" cried I. . . . ⁵⁸

" Open! And despatch, in the name of all the devils!" ⁵⁹

As an epithet the devil's name, perhaps with a connected phrase, is often used, as:

. . . . the unholy train with its devil's war-whoop
 ⁶⁰

. . . . But the old daredevil spirit was upon me, and I said that as I had committed myself I would not back down; I would ascend Mont Blanc if it cost me my life. . . . ⁶¹

. . . . a bit of harum-scarum, devil-may-care piloting, ⁶²

. . . . on account of a kind of devilish comfort he got out of it. . . . ⁶³

⁵² *Tom Sawyer*, p. 59.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁵⁴ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 467.

⁵⁵ *Joan of Arc*, II, 207.

⁵⁶ *The Prince and the Pauper*, p. 94.

⁵⁷ *Joan of Arc*, II, 262.

⁵⁸ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 283.

⁵⁹ *The Prince and the Pauper*, p. 175.

⁶⁰ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 474.

⁶¹ *A Tramp Abroad*, II, 181.

⁶² *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 123.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

. . . . going through that sort of tight-rope deviltry the same as before.⁶⁴

Particularly in the naming of dangerous points and landmarks on or near the Mississippi River (by the pilots, presumably), does Mark Twain show origins of devil place-names. There is a "Devil's Island"⁶⁵ and "Devil's Elbow."⁶⁶ One place, the Tower,

. . . . has the Devil's Bake-oven— the Devil's Tea-table—
. . . . Devil's Elbow and the Devil's Race-course, and lots of other property of his which I cannot now call to mind.⁶⁷

He uses the devil in his own figures of speech:

..... the piles of damp bagasse burn slowly, and smoke like Satan's own kitchen.⁶⁸

Thus used, the word "Satan" is so common through all Mark Twain's works that it is hardly to be styled a euphemism for "the Devil," even though it might ordinarily be so classified. A mere "tin whistle" is "a veritable invention of Satan, sir,"⁶⁹ to the Mormon father of many wives' children.

His mother, Mark Twain tells us, defended Satan:

. . . . She admitted that the indictment was sound, that Satan was utterly wicked and abandoned, just as these people had said; but would any claim that he had been treated fairly? A sinner was but a sinner; Satan was just that, like the rest⁷⁰

Of his own feeling toward this sinner, Mark Twain says:

. . . . I have no special regard for Satan; but I can at least claim that I have no prejudice against him. It may even be that I lean a little his way, on account of his not having a fair show. . . .⁷¹

Two clear cases of euphemism for "the Devil" do appear, however, and in both instances it is Tom Sawyer's aunts who voice them: Aunt Polly, in Missouri, declares, "He's full of the Old Scratch,"⁷² and Aunt Sally, near Pikesville, down the river, fumes, "I lay I'll tan the Old Harry out o' both o' ye!"⁷³

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 286.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 242.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 208 f.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

⁶⁹ *Roughing It*, I, 106.

⁷⁰ *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, I, 117.

⁷¹ *Literary Essays*, "Concerning the Jews," p. 264.

⁷² *Tom Sawyer*, p. 3.

⁷³ *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 398.

IV

WITCHCRAFT

"The veritable Witch of Endor" is the oldest representative of the weird sisterhood to be found in Mark Twain's works. When he visited the Holy Land as a member of the *Quaker City* excursion, in 1867, one of the celebrated sights was "Endor, famous for its witch."¹ This first round-the-world tourist party saw the

. . . . mouth of the dismal cavern once occupied by the veritable Witch of Endor. In this cavern, tradition says, Saul, the King, sat at midnight, and stared and trembled, while the earth shook, the thunders crashed among the hills, and out of the midst of fire and smoke the spirit of the dead prophet rose up and confronted him. Saul had crept to this place in the darkness, while his army slept, to learn what fate awaited him in the morrow's battle. He went away a sad man, to meet disgrace and death.²

The traditions about witches retain certain fixed features through the ages, and of these Mark Twain's witchcraft reveals an intimate and complete knowledge. As old a witch as Endor's dwelt in a cavern; while the thunderings and lightnings, storm, and midnight hour are still customary accompaniments of a visit to a witch.

Mark Twain's next witch (in period of setting, not date of composition) is of the early sixth century, in the England of King Arthur and the Round Table:

. . . . A mob said she was a witch who had caused several cows to die by a strange disease, and practised her arts by help of a devil in the form of a black cat. . . . The mob wanted to burn her.³

The relationship of demonology and witchcraft is apparent even in this relic.⁴ Belief in a devil's ability to assume any desired shape is seen recurring here.

It must be acknowledged that Mark Twain could have known witches of remote historical periods only at second hand, and that his sketches of them may possibly contain

¹ *The Innocents Abroad*, II, 276.

² *Ibid.*, II, 277.

³ *A Connecticut Yankee*, p. 357.

⁴ See Introduction, p. 7.

elements of contemporary witchcraft. But it must also be remembered that his interest in witches, as in all branches of folklore, was almost scientific, as has been indicated in the introduction to this study.

In the essay, *Saint Joan of Arc*, Mr. Clemens brings out the fact that even in the early fifteenth century judges in The Great Trial, unable to explain the secret of the Maid's influence over her soldiers, subjected her to

. . . . searchings to find out what kind of devil's witchcraft she had employed to rouse the war spirit in her timid soldiers,⁵

And at the first, before it was proved that her powers were being exercised solely for the good of France, even the French governor of her province

. . . . had made up his mind to one thing: Joan was either a witch or a saint, and he meant to find out which it was. So he brought a priest with him to exorcise the devil that was in her in case there was one there. The priest performed his office, but found no devil. . . . and should have known, if he knew anything, that devils cannot abide the confessional, but utter cries of anguish and the most profane and furious cursings whenever they are confronted with that holy office.⁶

Even later, when she reached him who was later to be King, his ministers were afraid, and

. . . . argued and arrived at the decision that Joan was a witch, and had her strange pluck and strength from Satan; so they made a plan to watch for a safe opportunity and take her life.⁷

In the meantime, Joan's forces were driving the English out of their garrisons in France—not much of a task, it appears, as long as she could inspire her troops to such an extent that the English soldiers thought:

. . . . —surely this is a witch, this is a child of Satan! That was their thought—and without stopping to analyze the matter they turned and fled in a panic.⁸

Occasionally in Joan's absence the English made a successful sortie, "a thing quite easy to do, since the 'Witch' would

⁵ *Literary Essays*, "Saint Joan of Arc," p. 371.

⁶ *Joan of Arc*, I, 94 f.

⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 110.

⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 251.

not be there,"⁹ and "being used to victories when 'witches' were not around."¹⁰

The French people, however, did not consider Joan of Arc a witch, and the court must prove the charge before executing her, or the people would think her a martyr to the French cause:

. . . . If the Church could be brought to take her life, or to proclaim her an idolater, a heretic, a witch, sent from Satan, not from heaven, it was believed that the English supremacy could be at once reinstated.¹¹

Therefore, the set of charges brought before the court called her

. . . . a sorceress, a false prophet, an invoker and companion of evil spirits, a dealer in magic,¹²

Her leading persecutor did not judge the evidence, but spoke his opinion before the trial, revealing his prejudice:

"The fat Bishop says he will lead the vile witch a merry dance and a short one."¹³

It was no "short" dance, for the charges were difficult to substantiate, but in the end, "Joan had been adjudged guilty of heresy, sorcery, He could send her to the stake at once."¹⁴ Under duress and through trickery she was led to put her name to a statement, and later found that

. . . . She had signed a paper confessing herself a sorceress, a dealer with devils, a liar, commissioned of Satan;¹⁵

Of her punishment, little need be said. It was the customary

"Scaffolds and the stake. Don't you know that the French witch is to be burned in the morning?"¹⁶

And finally, over the city the news is spreading:

" *The witch's time has come!*"¹⁷

Mark Twain is able to be tragic no longer, cannot resist pok-

⁹ *Ibid.*, I, 218.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, I, 236.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, II, 104.

¹² *Ibid.*, II, 201.

¹³ *Ibid.*, II, 123.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 236.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, II, 251.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, II, 240.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, II, 258.

ing fun at dignitaries of the University of Paris and of the Church, by showing that the

. . . . King had gotten his crown by the hands of a person proven by the priests to have been in league with Satan and burned for it by them as a sorceress—¹⁸

A century later, in England, the prophecy of a wandering witch is almost evidence enough to convict a stranger:

" Many testified that a witch, since gone from the village, none know whither, did foretell, and speak it privately in their ears, that the sick man *would die by poison*—and more, that a stranger would give it—a stranger with brown hair and clothed in a worn and common garb. . . . Please, your majesty, to give the circumstance that solemn weight which is its due, seeing it was foretold."

This was an argument of tremendous force, in that superstitious day. . . .¹⁹

Two further instances from this period indicate the penalty for being thought a witch:

" Her gift of palmistry and other sorts of fortune-telling begot for her at last a witch's name and fame. The law roasted her to death at a slow fire. . . ."²⁰

" My good old blameless mother strove to earn bread by nursing the sick; one of these died, the doctors knew not how, so my mother was burned for a witch,"²¹

The barbaric punishment was long in force, but in *The Prince and the Pauper* Mark Twain indicates a slight waning of belief in witchcraft. Of the previous century no such incredulity was suggested. The false and youthful King, Tom Cauty, hears a case against witches and boldly exposes its lack of foundation on fact:

"Please, your majesty, a black crime is charged upon them, and clearly proven; wherefore the judges have decreed, according to the law, that they be hanged. They sold themselves to the devil—such is their crime."

Tom shuddered. He had been taught to abhor people who did this wicked thing. . . .

"Where was this done?—and when?"

"On a midnight, in December—in a ruined church, your majesty."

Tom shuddered again.

"Who was there present?"

"Only these two, your grace—and *that other*."

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, II, 286.

¹⁹ *The Prince and the Pauper*, p. 120.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

"Then, prithee, how was it known?"

"Certain witnesses did see them wending thither, good your majesty; this bred the suspicion, and dire effects have since confirmed and justified it. In particular, it is in evidence that through the wicked power so obtained, they did invoke and bring about a storm that wasted all the region round about. Above forty witnesses have proved the storm; . . . " ²²

But since the woman herself had been left destitute by the storm, Tom argued:

"Methinks the power to do herself so ill a turn was dearly bought. She had been cheated, had she paid but a farthing for it; that she paid her soul, and her child's, argueth that she is mad; if she is mad she knoweth not what she doth, therefore sinneth not." ²³

He then shows that by the law, "The *devil* may buy a child, if he so choose, and the child agree thereto," ²⁴ while an Englishman would not have that right. He finds, too, that these two who had sold themselves brought on the storm by the simple expedient, "By pulling off their stockings," ²⁵ and commands that he be shown a storm. The woman protests her innocence. Tom insists that the charm be attempted, but no storm appears. His verdict is:

"There, good soul, trouble thyself no further, thy power is departed out of thee. Go thy way in peace; and if it return to thee at any time, forget me not, but fetch me a storm." ²⁶

These ideas of witches are historic, and not of major consideration in Mark Twain's folklore, but the Mississippi Valley members of the craft, he knew from the Negroes—from whom, in fact, he obtained the most of his folklore. A way-South Negro, a "hand" of Tom Sawyer's Uncle Silas, thinks he sees witches:

"Oh, it's de dad-blame' witches, sah, en I wisht I was dead, I do. Dey's awluz at it, sah, en dey do mos' kill me, dey sk'yers me so. Please to don't tell nobody 'bout it, sah, er ole Mars Silas he'll scole me; 'kase he say dey ain't no witches. I jis' wish to

²² *Ibid.*, p. 122.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 126. The author refers to "The Famous Stocking Case," and cites a passage in his "Notes" (pp. 275-281) from Dr. J. Hammond Trumbull's *Blue Laws, True and False*, p. 20. "A woman and her daughter, nine years old, were hanged in Huntingdon for selling their souls to the devil, and raising a storm by pulling off their stockings!" (p. 278).

goodness he was heah now—*den* what would he say! I jis' bet he couldn' fine no way to git aroun' it *dis* time. But it's awluz jis' so; people dat's *sot*, stays sot; dey won't look into noth'n' en fine it out f'r deyselves, en when *you* fine it out en tell um 'bout it, dey doan' b'lieve you." 27

A northern Negro, the boys' friend, Jim, had experienced witches:

. . . . Afterward Jim said the witches bewitched him and put him in a trance, and rode him all over the state, and then set him under the trees again, and hung his hat on a limb to show who done it. . . . and, after that, every time he told it he spread it more and more, . . . Niggers would come miles to hear Jim tell about it, and he was more looked up to than any nigger in that country. . . . Niggers is always talking about witches in the dark by the kitchen fire; but whenever one was talking and letting on to know all about such things, Jim would happen in and say, "Hm! What you know 'bout witches?" and that nigger was corked up and had to take a back seat. . . . Jim was most ruined for a servant, because he got stuck up on account of having seen the devil and been rode by witches. 28

Later, marooned on a river island, Jim's belief in witches is again displayed, when Huck "fetched meal and bacon and coffee, and coffee-pot and frying-pan, and sugar and tin cups, and the nigger was set back considerable, because he reckoned it was all done with witchcraft." 29

The witch of Negro folklore, like all others of her craft from time immemorial, held kinship with devils and possessed the common ability of both witches and demons to change her shape at will. Witness the southern Negro's second experience with the pack of dogs he thought to be witches:

"Mars Sid, you'll say I's a fool, but if I didn't b'lieve I see most a million dogs, er devils, er some'n, I wisht I may die right heah in dese tracks. I did, mos' sholy. Mars Sid, I *felt* um—I *felt* um, sah; dey was all over me. Dad fetch it, I jis' wisht I could git my han's on one er dem witches jis' wunst—on'y jis' yunst—it's all I'd ast. But mos'ly I wisht dey'd lemme 'lone, I does." 30

Huck saw the whole incident, and his succinct summary of it proves how firmly fixed was the belief of the colored man:

. . . . The nigger Nat he only just hollered "Witches" once, and keeled over onto the floor amongst the dogs, and begun to groan like he was dying. . . . 31

27 *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 329.

28 *Ibid.*, p. 8 f.

29 *Ibid.*, p. 59.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 346.

31 *Ibid.*, pp. 345 f.

After Nat's recital of this experience, the ever-inventive Tom played on his superstition in order to further his scheme of "freeing" Jim from prison:

Tom says:

"Well, I tell you what I think. What makes them come here just at this runaway nigger's breakfast-time? It's because they're hungry; that's the reason. You make them a witch pie; that's the thing for *you* to do."³²

The Negro Nat had never heard of such a thing, but he accepted it as a bit of witchcraft with which he was unfamiliar. His evident reluctance to touch "witch things" is the prevailing belief that evil powers are inherent in objects touched by the devil:

"But my lan', Mars Sid, how's I gwyne to make'm a witch pie? I doan' know how to make it. I hain't ever hearn er sich a thing b'fo'."

"Well, then, I'll have to make it myself."

"Will you do it, honey?—will you? I'll wusshup de groun' und' yo' foot, I will!"

"All right, I'll do it, seeing it's you, . . . But you got to be mighty careful. When we come around, you turn your back; and then whatever we've put in the pan, don't you let on you see it at all. And don't you look when Jim unloads the pan—something might happen, I don't know what. And above all, don't you *handle* the witch things."

"*Hannel* 'm, Mars Sid? What is you a-talkin' 'bout? I wouldn' lay de weight er my finger on um, not f'r ten hund'd thous'n billion dollars, I wouldn't."³³

The time for the appearance of witches apparently coincides with that decreed for other supernatural beings. The Negro Nat wants the boys to accompany him on errands "more particular if it was dark, because the witches went for him mostly in the dark, and it was good to have folks around then."³⁴ The boys tremble at the fearsomeness of the hour when they hunt treasure at midnight. Says Huck:

" . . . this kind of thing's too awful, here this time of night with witches and ghosts a-fluttering around so. I feel as if something's behind me all the time; and I'm afeard to turn around, becuz maybe ther's others in front a-waiting for a chance. I been creeping all over, ever since I got here."³⁵

³² *Ibid.*, p. 346.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 346 f.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 329.

³⁵ *Tom Sawyer*, pp. 206 f.

Tom at one time declares, "Shucks, witches ain't got no power in the daytime."³⁶

Mark Twain uses the common figure, "I stood like one bewitched,"³⁷ to express his admiration for a beautiful river sunset. One wonders if he realized and disregarded the word's connotation of a witch's horrible trance, feared by all superstitious peoples.

Huckleberry Finn is the authority for the only concrete information about bewitching in Mark Twain's works:

" . . . they say she's a witch."

"Say! Why, Tom, I *know* she is. She witched pap. . . . he see she was a-witching him, so he took up a rock, and if she hadn't dodged, he'd 'a' got her. Well, that very night he rolled off'n a shed wher' he was a-layin' drunk, and broke his arm."

" . . . How did he know she was a-witching him?"

"Lord, pap can tell, easy. Pap says when they keep looking at you right stiddy, they're a-witching you. Specially if they mumble. Becuz when they mumble they're saying the Lord's Prayer backwards."³⁸

Whatever may have been the origin of the witchcraft superstitions, whatever part may have come from Africa, it is certain that the incantation used in this case cannot have been a popular belief among the Negroes before their association with the whites. It is a distinct borrowing from the Christian religion, and as such a proof that some of the Southern superstitions attributed to the ignorance of the Negro may be founded on the beliefs of his masters.

If persons have not been previously "witched" to keep them from carrying out certain projects, the witches themselves may take an active interest in the affair, and "interfere," as Tom suggested when he and Huck were unsuccessful in their treasure hunt:

"It *is* mighty curious, Huck. I don't understand it. Sometimes witches interfere. I reckon maybe that's what's the trouble now."³⁹

On another occasion Tom thought "interference" explained why one of his pet charms failed to work. He had decided to run away to sea and was collecting his belongings:

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

³⁷ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 79.

³⁸ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 58.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

. . . . He went to a rotten log near at hand and began to dig under one end of it with his Barlow knife. He soon struck wood that sounded hollow. He put his hand there and uttered this incantation impressively:

"What hasn't come here, *come!* What's here, *stay* here!"

Then he scraped away the dirt, and exposed a pine shingle. He took it up, and disclosed a shapely little treasure-house whose bottom and sides were of shingles. In it lay a marble. Tom's astonishment was boundless! He scratched his head with a perplexed air, and said:

"Well, that beats anything!"

Then he tossed the marble away pettishly, and stood cogitating. The truth was, that a superstition of his had failed, here, which he and all his comrades had always looked upon as infallible. If you buried a marble with certain necessary incantations, and left it alone a fortnight, and then opened the place with the incantation he had just used, you would find that all the marbles you had ever lost had gathered themselves together there, meantime, no matter how widely they had been separated. But, now this thing had actually and unquestionably failed. Tom's whole structure of faith was shaken to its foundations. He had many a time heard of this thing succeeding, but never of its failing before. It did not occur to him that he had tried it several times before, himself, but could never find the hiding-places afterward. He puzzled over the matter some time, and finally decided that some witch had interfered and broken the charm. He thought he would satisfy himself on that point;⁴⁰

The charm Tom used to find out if a witch had interfered proved efficacious:

. . . . so he searched around till he found a small sandy spot with a little funnel-shaped depression in it. He laid himself down and put his mouth close to this depression and called.

"Doodle-bug, doodle-bug, tell me what I want to know! Doodle-bug, doodle-bug, tell me what I want to know!"

The sand began to work, and presently a small black bug appeared for a second and then darted under again in a fright.

"He dasn't tell! So it *was* a witch that done it. I just knowed it."

He well knew the futility of trying to contend against witches, so he gave up discouraged.⁴¹

In spite of the general fear of witches, occasions were conceivable on which their presence might actually be desired. At least, that is the implication from Jim's pride in the coin he thought witches had given him, but which in reality had come from the boys:

. . . . Jim always kept that five-center piece round his neck with a string, and said it was a charm the devil give him with his own hands, and told him he could cure anybody with it and fetch

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 75 f.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 76 f.

witches whenever he wanted to just by saying something to it; but he never told what it was he said to it. Niggers would come from all around there and give Jim anything they had, just for a sight of that five-center piece; but they wouldn't touch it, because the devil had had his hands on it. . . . ⁴²

The fear of touching anything the devil has touched seems a rather prevalent taboo.

Charms and fetishes and rigamaroles to keep witches away are common. "Aunt" Hannah, who was "superstitious, like the other negroes," ⁴³ had in common with the others of her race, "great faith in prayer and employed it in all ordinary exigencies, but not in cases where a dead certainty of result was urgent," for

. . . . Whenever witches were around she tied up the remnant of her wool in little tufts, with white thread, and this promptly made the witches impotent.⁴⁴

Huck Finn took this precaution, with an added bit of ritual, to insure his safety:

. . . . I got up and turned around in my tracks three times and crossed my breast every time; and then I tied up a little lock of my hair with a thread to keep witches away. . . . ⁴⁵

This fetish was apparently widespread, for the way-South Negro, Nat, dressed his hair in the same fashion:

. . . . his wool was all tied up in little bunches with thread. That was to keep witches off. He said the witches was pestering him awful these nights, and making him see all kinds of strange things, and hear all kinds of strange words and noises, and he didn't believe he was ever witched so long before in his life. . . . ⁴⁶

Tom Sawyer, Huck says, once gave Nat a dime, "and told him to buy some more thread to tie up his wool with." ⁴⁷

People as superstitious as these were "easy meat" for traveling rogues, like the king and the duke encountered by Huck and Jim on one of their journeys. The duke, for instance, had show bills printed in which

. . . . he had a lot of other names and done other wonderful things, like finding water and gold with a "divining-rod," "dissipating witch spells," and so on. . . . ⁴⁸

⁴² *Huckleberry Finn*, pp. 8 f.

⁴³ *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, I, 99 f.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 100.

⁴⁵ *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 5.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 327.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 329.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

Mark Twain does not confine his references to witchcraft to the sorcerers of his own Mississippi Valley. From Major Sleeman's book on India he paraphrases a superstition linked with marriage:

. . . . In his day [Sleeman's] witches abounded, and it was not thought good business wisdom for a man to marry his daughter into a family that hadn't a witch in it, for she would need a witch on the premises to protect her children from the evil spells which would certainly be cast upon them by the witches connected with the neighboring families.⁴⁹

But Mark Twain is more at home in his own front yard ("as the sayin' is"), particularly in citations of the Negroes' superstitious beliefs. Roxy is frightened by Pudd'nhead Wilson's fingerprinting, and "reckons":

" I b'lieve he's a witch. But nemmine, But I reckon I'll take along a hoss-shoe to keep off de witch work."⁵⁰

She is not pure Negro, and Pudd'nhead's comment on her caution reflects rather accurately, one may presume, Mark Twain's own attitude toward the mulatto:

. . . . "The drop of black blood in her is superstitious; she thinks there's some devilry, some witch business about my glass mystery somewhere; she used to come here with an old horseshoe in her hand; it could have been an accident, but I doubt it."⁵¹

⁴⁹ *Following the Equator*, II, 140.

⁵⁰ *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, p. 24.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

V

LUCK AND UNLUCK

To the superstitious, success is dependent upon "luck," and failure may result if luck is unfavorable. In Mark Twain, a person may be permanently destitute of luck as "the luckless Duke of Norfolk,"¹ or only temporarily forsaken, as "a pilot who was 'out of luck'."² There was also a time "'when I [Huck] was out of luck.'"³ Sometimes there are longer periods of "no luck," such as:

"But I didn' have no luck. . . . "⁴

. . . but they couldn't seem to have no luck. . . . "⁵

" . . . He gave me the wheel once or twice, but I had no luck. . . . "⁶

In Mark Twain the expression, "good luck," is rare; the word "luck" alone implies fortune that is acceptable. In one case, however, two men got hold of "something with money in it, . . . by good luck."⁷ In another instance, just as

. . . misfortunes never come one at a time, but in a body. . . . it was the same with good luck. Having got a start, it came flooding in, tide after tide. . . . Oh, yes, wave on wave the good luck came sweeping in. . . . "⁸

Mark Twain says whimsically in an autobiographical reference to his father, that he "'kept store' . . . several years, but had no luck, except that I was born to him."⁹ A person may also be "in luck,"¹⁰ or perhaps only partially so, like a miner who "hadn't a cent the next morning, if he had any sort of luck."¹¹ It appears that between a white and an octoroon baby there was a variance in degree of "luck," for Roxy, nurse and mother, cries:

¹ *The Prince and the Pauper*, p. 52.

² *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 130.

³ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 190.

⁴ *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 62.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 290.

⁶ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 46.

⁷ *The Gilded Age*, II, 168.

⁸ *Joan of Arc*, I, 169.

⁹ *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, I, 6.

¹⁰ *The Gilded Age*, II, 317.

¹¹ *Roughing It*, II, 133.

"What has my po' baby done, dat he couldn't have yo' luck? He ha'n't done noth'n'. God was good to you; why warn't he good to him? " ¹²

It is evidently a matter of being born lucky. There is such a thing, according to Clemens, who says of a man:

. . . . He has been pursued, day by day and year by year, by a most phenomenal and astonishing luckiness. . . . proof that the very best thing in all this world that can befall a man is to be born lucky. . . . ¹³

"Nigger Jim," admitting that he is not lucky, tells of an acquaintance of his, a "chucklehead" (which may account for it):

" he's lucky, dey say, en I see I warn't lucky. . . . " ¹⁴

Even in fifteenth-century France one person is said by another to be the "pet child of luck":

"And think of his luck!" burst out Noël, "Always the pet child of luck! See how it followed him and stayed by him, from his first step all through, in the field or out of it; . . . and at last—supremest luck of all—died in the field! . . . What luck, what luck! And we? What was our sin that we are still here, we who have also earned our place with the happy dead?" ¹⁵

Mere "luck" seems ever welcome, a good reason why it may be assumed to carry the connotation of "good luck." Witness Tom and Huck on seeing actual treasure before them:

. . . . With gloating eyes they watched every movement. Luck! —the splendor of it was beyond all imagination! . . . ¹⁶

Tom, lost in the cave with Becky, shouts simply "for luck" ¹⁷ — at least so he tells her. Clemens speaks of "storms which I have had the luck to see in the Alps," ¹⁸ as well as of the safe trip of an unpiloted boat as "only luck," ¹⁹ and "a lucky piece of sagacity in us." ²⁰ He remarks of a perilous crisis that "it happened luckily that the crew" ²¹ was fortuitously engaged.

¹² *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, p. 18.

¹³ *The American Claimant*, "Luck," pp. 288 f.

¹⁴ *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 65.

¹⁵ *Joan of Arc*, II, 110.

¹⁶ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 215.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 261.

¹⁸ *Life on the Mississippi*, pp. 407 f.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

²⁰ *A Tramp Abroad*, II, 174.

²¹ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 308.

There are degrees of luck: "the luckiest accident that ever happened,"²² and "this gigantic piece of luck."²³ But luck alone is not always responsible for success. Mark Twain writes in one instance, "Well, we could but do our best, and let luck and fate decide what should happen,"²⁴ and in another case it is "a combination of luck and care."²⁵

Over Joan of Arc hung a different species of luck:

. . . . the protecting luck which attends upon ignorance and innocence,²⁶

Unluck was thought to possess an almost human malignity. When "luck's against us," Jim says to Huck,

" if we didn't try hard to make out to understand them warnings that would come every now and then they'd just take us into bad luck, 'stead of keeping us out of it. . . . " ²⁷

Negative luck was usually designated in Mark Twain as "ill luck":

. . . . Hadleyburg had the ill luck to offend a passing stranger—
. . . .²⁸

. . . . They were too much absorbed in hating the ill luck that made them take the spade and pick there. . . .²⁹

Tuesday the boys had the same ill luck. Also Wednesday. But Thursday night promised better. . . .³⁰

. . . . I was manifestly endowed with the very genius of ill luck. . . .³¹

. . . . I had no ill luck myself, but none of my cousins escaped.
. . . .³²

Sixteenth century English dialect—Mark Twain held high standards for his dialects—probably accounts for Miles Hendon's muttered, "Now is my evil luck ended at last."³³

Washington Hawkins, in Washington, D. C., was pursued by "hard luck":

²² *Ibid.*, p. 51.

²³ *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg*, p. 66.

²⁴ *Joan of Arc*, II, 113.

²⁵ *A Tramp Abroad*, II, 93.

²⁶ *Joan of Arc*, II, 141.

²⁷ *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 118.

²⁸ *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg*, p. 2.

²⁹ *Tom Sawyer*, pp. 218 f. "Bitter, bitter luck," it was.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 224.

³¹ *A Tramp Abroad*, II, 26.

³² *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, I, 106.

³³ *The Prince and the Pauper*, p. 266.

" I am become so used to troubles, hard luck of all kinds, Don't you see how our bad luck has worked on me? My hair is getting gray, " ³⁴

The strongest adjective in all Mark Twain's works occurs in the verbal explosion of a man who could not get a ticket to one of Mr. Clemens' lectures: "It's just my God damned luck." ³⁵

Another kind of luck, mentioned by the Welshman in *Tom Sawyer*, is "meanest":

" just then I found I was going to sneeze. It was the meanest kind of luck! " ³⁶

No specific "lucky days" are listed in Mark Twain, but certain passages definitely imply their existence. Friday, for instance, is held to be unlucky:

" Tom was impatient to go to the haunted house; Huck was measurably so, also—but suddenly said:

"Lookyhere, Tom, do you know what day it is?"

Tom mentally ran over the days of the week, and then quickly lifted his eyes with a startled look in them—

"My! I never once thought of it, Huck!"

"Well, I didn't neither, but all at once it popped onto me that it was Friday."

"Blame it, a body can't be too careful, Huck. We might 'a' got into an awful scrape, tackling such a thing on a Friday."

"*Might!* Better say we *would!* There's some lucky days, maybe, but Friday ain't."

"Any fool knows that. I don't reckon *you* was the first that found it out, Huck."

"Well, I never said I was, did I? And Friday ain't all, neither. . . . " ³⁷

For Huck has dreamed of rats, too.

"No! Sure sign of trouble. Did they fight?"

"No."

"Well, that's good, Huck. When they don't fight it's only a sign that there's trouble around, you know. All we got to do is to look mighty sharp and keep out of it. We'll drop this thing for to-day, and play. . . . " ³⁸

And play they did, but close enough to the haunted house to keep a "yearning eye" upon it. When at last they actually visited the place they heard Injun Joe and his accomplice talking about them, and they

³⁴ *The Gilded Age*, II, 208.

³⁵ *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, II, 201.

³⁶ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 240.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 209.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 209 f.

. . . . quaked again under the inspiration of this remark, and thought how lucky it was that they had remembered it was Friday and concluded to wait a day. They wished in their hearts they had waited a year.³⁹

The thought that one man's good luck may be another's bad, is suggested seriously in Mr. Clemens' reference to "a charming mansion. . . . which, by good luck, we had gotten hold of through another man's ill luck,"⁴⁰ and rather facetiously in a remark that his father-in-law had

. . . . just barely escaped once the good luck—or the bad luck—of becoming a great railway magnate. . . .⁴¹

He uses a similar parody as a literary device:

. . . . New Orleans, I believe, has had the good luck—and in a sense the bad luck—to have had no great fire in late years. . . .⁴²

That Mark Twain "believed in luck," the following personal observation, "speaking from the grave,"⁴³ tends to indicate:

Persons who think there is no such thing as luck—good or bad—are entitled to their opinion. Clara Spaulding had the average being's luck in all things save one; she was subject to ill luck with horses. It pursued her like a disease. . . .⁴⁴

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

⁴⁰ *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, II, 154.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, II, 126.

⁴² *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 341.

⁴³ *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, I, preface, xv. His phrase for writing the *Autobiography*, inasmuch as he had ordered that the book should not be printed until a specified period after his death, was "speaking from the grave."

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 140. Material published in the two volumes of the *Autobiography* is of two kinds, and of two periods. Through page 265, Volume I, the material is edited from his own manuscripts, prepared at various times, beginning as early as 1870. Beyond this point the autobiography was dictated by Mr. Clemens, beginning January 9, 1906. This quotation about "Persons who think there is no such thing as luck," is dated Monday, February 26, 1906.

VI

SIGNS, PORTENTS, OMENS

Intimately associated with luck and unluck in Mark Twain's folklore are certain control-signs, "beliefs in causal relationships which modern science show to be incorrect."¹ A few of these are positive; that is, are methods to summon favorable luck, but the remainder (the more numerous) are negative, and, to the degree that ill luck is undesirable, constitute taboos. In all the idea of personal intervention is foremost; but there are also groups of signs which imply certainty transcending human control.

"Nigger Jim" took occasion to warn Huck about certain negative control-signs when the two were voluntarily marooned on the island, and Huck's meditations, coupled with the closing remarks of Jim's dissertation, reveal the popular belief:

I had heard about some of these things before, but not all of them. Jim knowed all kinds of signs. He said he knowed most everything. I said it looked to me like all the signs was about bad luck, and so I asked him if there warn't any good-luck signs. He says:

"Mighty few—an' *dey* ain't no use to a body. What you want to know when good luck's a-comin' for? Want to keep it off? . . . "

Roxy wondered, "What has my po' baby done, dat he couldn't have yo' luck?" and in the same breath realized hopelessly, "He hain't done noth'n."²

Joan of Arc's judges tried to show that she was in league with the devil, by questions which would prove that she had used control-signs to bring on luck:

"Did you not say to your men that pennons made like your banner would be lucky?"³

And again:

"Didn't you lay it upon the altar, to the end that it [a sword] might be lucky?" (The altar of St. Denis.)

"No."

"Didn't you pray that it might be made lucky?"⁴

¹ N. N. Puckett, *Folk Beliefs of the Southern Negro*, p. 312.

² *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 63.

³ *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, p. 18.

⁴ *Joan of Arc*, II, 176.

⁵ *Ibid.*, II, 155.

Praying for luck was considered sacrilegious: "It would be wicked, thought Philip, and impious, to pray for luck." "

Other more positive control-signs are referred to:

" There's a saying that he that would cross a river twice in the same day in a boat, will do well to eat fish for luck, lest he have an accident." ⁷

. . . . One of his upper front teeth was loose. This was lucky;
. . . . ⁸

Miners, about to quit work because they had not found coal, told their employer (the same Philip who thought it "wicked and impious" to pray for luck): "Now we want to put in one parting blast for luck." ⁹ And, "The men went back to the tunnel and 'put in a parting blast for luck,' anyhow." ¹⁰ In this case the control-sign availed.

When Huck fibs about a steamboat accident, the query "anybody hurt?" elicited the answer, "No'm. Killed a nigger." The comment following, "Well, it's lucky;" ¹¹ may reveal a control-sign, but more probably meant that a Negro was nobody.

When Huck saw driftwood and other salable wreckage approaching, he exclaimed: "The June rise used to be always luck for me." ¹²

"Nigger Jim" once warned Huck:

" you mustn't count the things you are going to cook for dinner, because that would bring bad luck. The same if you shook the table-cloth after sundown. . . . " ¹³

Huck was unused to eating at formal table, and at the "Widder Douglass's" his awkwardness gave him a fright:

One morning I happened to turn over the salt-cellar at breakfast. I reached for some of it as quick as I could to throw over my left shoulder and keep off the bad luck, but Miss Watson was in ahead of me, and crossed me off. . . . The widow put in a good word for me, but that warn't going to keep off the bad luck, I knowed that well enough. . . . There is ways to keep off some kinds of bad luck, but this wasn't one of them kind; so I never tried to do anything, but just poked along low-spirited and on the watch-out. ¹⁴

⁶ *The Gilded Age*, II, 273.

⁷ *Joan of Arc*, I, 261.

⁸ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 50.

⁹ *The Gilded Age*, II, 313. The locale was Ilium, Pennsylvania.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, II, 313.

¹¹ *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 306.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 21 f.

On the island, Huck learned of a taboo when he

. . . . wanted to talk about the dead man and guess out how he come to be killed, but Jim didn't want to. He said it would fetch bad luck;¹⁵

But Huck boldly brought the subject into the conversation again:

. . . . I said I reckoned they killed him, too; but Jim didn't want to talk about that. I says:

"Now you think it's bad luck; but what did you say when I fetched in the snake-skin that I found on the top of the ridge day before yesterday? You said it was the worst bad luck in the world to touch a snake-skin with my hands. Well, here's your bad luck! We've raked in all this truck and eight dollars besides. I wish we could have some bad luck like this every day, Jim."¹⁶

But Jim stands by his first pronouncements:

"Never you mind, honey, never you mind. Don't you git too peart. It's a-comin'. Mind I tell you, it's a-comin'."¹⁷

Later Huck is quite willing to believe in the signs, and to abide by Jim's warnings in the future:

It did come, too. It was a Tuesday that we had that talk. Well, after dinner Friday we was laying around in the grass at the upper end of the ridge, and got out of tobacco. I went to the cavern to get some, and found a rattlesnake in there. I killed him, and curled him up on the foot of Jim's blanket, ever so natural, thinking there'd be some fun when Jim found him there. Well, by night I forgot all about the snake, and when Jim flung himself down on the blanket while I struck a light the snake's mate was there, and bit him.

. . . . I made up my mind I wouldn't ever take a-holt of a snake-skin again with my hands, now that I see what had come of it. Jim said he reckoned I would believe him next time. And he said that handling a snake-skin was such awful bad luck that maybe we hadn't got to the end of it yet. He said he druther see the new moon over his left shoulder as much as a thousand times than take up a snake-skin in his hand.¹⁸

Apparently, then, there are degrees of malignance in taboos. Huck is not certain that he agrees with Jim:

. . . . Well, I was getting to feel that way myself, though I've always reckoned that looking at the new moon over your left shoulder is one of the carelessest and foolishhest things a body can do. Old Hank Bunker done it once, and bragged about it;

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 73 f.

and in less than two years he got drunk and fell off of the shot-tower, and spread himself out so that he was just a kind of a layer, But anyway it all come of looking at the moon that way, like a fool.¹⁹

Just as Jim feared, their bad luck had scarcely begun. To a Negro attempting escape to a "free state," there could hardly have been a more disheartening piece of ill luck than to see his raft drift past the only safe landing place:

" Po' niggers can't have no luck. I awluz 'spected dat rattlesnake-skin warn't done wid its work."

"I wish I'd never seen that snake-skin, Jim—I do wish I'd never laid eyes on it."

"It ain't yo' fault, Huck; you didn' know. Don't you blame yo'self 'bout it." ²⁰

Later in the day Huck and Jim found that the canoe in which lay their only hope of getting back upstream was gone:

We didn't say a word for a good while. There warn't anything to say. We both knowed well enough it was some more work of the rattlesnake-skin; so what was the use to talk about it? It would only look like we was finding fault, and that would be bound to fetch more bad luck—and keep on fetching it, too, till we knowed enough to keep still.²¹

Even yet, Huck seems to fear that perhaps his reader will not believe in the rattlesnake superstition.

Anybody that don't believe yet that it's foolishness to handle a snake-skin, after all that that snake-skin done for us, will believe it now if they read on and see what more it done for us.²²

Follows his recital of how, shoving out again into the river on the raft, they were run down by a steamboat which did not see them. Huck's final comment is:

. . . . That all comes of my being such a fool as to not remember that wherever you leave a dead snake its mate always comes there and curls around it. ²³

Jim's wound, like Achilles', was "right on the heel," ²⁴ small but a significant consistency, for in *The Gilded Age* (written thirteen years before in collaboration with Charles

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 130.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

Dudley Warner ²⁵), a situation occurs in which a young easterner purchases leather *hip* boots as "a perfect protection against prairie-rattlesnakes, which never strike above the knee." ²⁶

To other snakelore there are two references in Mark Twain's works: a description of "the fabled 'hoop' breed," encountered in his childhood, from which, Clemens says, "we fled, without shame" ²⁷; and the appearance of snakes along with devils in Huck's "pap's" delirium tremens.²⁸

All "crawly things" were thought to bring bad luck, under certain circumstances. When Huck accidentally killed a spider, he performed the most powerful remedial ceremonies he knew in order to ward off the evil effects. Never having heard of a charm to counteract the ill luck of killing a spider, he selected two of the commonest methods of keeping witches away. Thus is evident the relation of witchcraft to various taboos.

. . . . Pretty soon a spider went crawling up my shoulder, and I flipped it off and it lit in the candle; and before I could budge it was all shriveled up. I didn't need anybody to tell me that that was an awful bad sign and would fetch me some bad luck, so I was scared and most shook the clothes off of me. I got up and turned around in my tracks three times and crossed my breast every time; and then I tied up a little lock of my hair with a thread to keep witches away. But I hadn't no confidence. You do that when you've lost a horseshoe that you've found, instead of nailing it up over the door, but I hadn't ever heard anybody say it was any way to keep off bad luck when you'd killed a spider.²⁹

In Negro folklore, "If you see a gray mare it is a sign of death." ³⁰ Steamboat captains on the Mississippi River considered it unlucky to take a preacher and a gray mare aboard. Mark Twain comments:

That this combination—of preacher and gray mare—should breed calamity seems strange, and at first glance unbelievable; but the fact is fortified by so much unassailable proof that to doubt is to dishonor reason. . . . ³¹

²⁵ *The Gilded Age* was published in 1872; *Huckleberry Finn* in 1885.

²⁶ *The Gilded Age*, I, 125. This chapter was written by C. D. Warner (See footnote, *Ibid.*, I, xvi.)

²⁷ *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, I, 103.

²⁸ *Huckleberry Finn*, pp. 39 f.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 4 f.

³⁰ N. N. Puckett, *Folk Beliefs of the Southern Negro*, p. 476.

³¹ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 212.

He cites an instance of the "unassailable proof":

. . . . I myself remember a case where a captain was warned by numerous friends against taking a gray mare and a preacher with him, but persisted in his purpose in spite of all that could be said; and the same day—it may have been the next, and some say it was, though I think it was the same day—he got drunk and fell down the hatchway and was borne to his home a corpse. This is literally true.³²

These reminiscences arose during a conversation about sunken steamboats which took place when Mark Twain revisited the Mississippi after an absence of twenty-one years from the pilot-house:

. . . . A good many steamboat corpses lie buried there, out of sight; among the rest, my first friend, the *Paul Jones*; she knocked her bottom out, and went down like a pot, so the historian told me—Uncle Mumford. He said she had a gray mare aboard, and a preacher. To me, this sufficiently accounted for the disaster; as it did, of course, to Mumford, who added:

"But there are many ignorant people who would scoff at such a matter, and call it superstition. But you will always notice that they are people who have never traveled with a gray mare and a preacher. I went down the river in such company. We grounded at Bloody Island; we grounded at Hanging Dog; we grounded just below this same Commerce; we jolted Beaver Dam Rock; we hit one of the worst breaks in the 'Graveyard' behind Goose Island; we had a roustabout killed in a fight; we burst a boiler; broke a shaft; collapsed a flue; and went into Cairo with nine feet of water in the hold—may have been more, may have been less. I remember it as if it were yesterday. The men lost their heads with terror. They painted the mare blue, in sight of town, and threw the preacher overboard, or we should not have arrived at all. The preacher was fished out and saved. He acknowledged, himself, that he had been to blame. I remember it all as if it were yesterday."³³

In an aboriginal Hawaiian historical legend retold by Mark Twain in *Roughing It*, the turning point in a battle was said to have come when "the chief priest fell, pierced to the heart with a spear, and the unlucky omen fell like a blight upon the brave souls."³⁴

"The people observe thy downcast head, thy clouded mien, and they take it for an omen,"³⁵ scolded one of the courtiers in *The Prince and the Pauper* to the false prince, Tom Canty,

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 212 f.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 211 f.

³⁴ *Roughing It*, II, 191.

³⁵ *The Prince and the Pauper*, p. 244.

during the coronation parade; and later realized that "the omen was pregnant with prophecy. He is gone mad again!"³⁶

After Jim had asked Huck, "What you want to know when good luck's a-comin' for? Want to keep it off?" he condescended to cite one of the rare instances when such foreknowledge might be valuable. He explained:

... "Ef you's got hairy arms en a hairy breas', it's a sign dat you's a-gwyne to be rich. Well, dey's some use in a sign like dat, 'kase it's so fur ahead. You see, maybe you's got to be po' a long time fust, en so you might git discourage' en kill yo'sef 'f you didn' know by de sign dat you gwyne to be rich bymeby."

"Have you got hairy arms and a hairy breast, Jim?"

"What's de use to ax dat question? Don't you see I has?"

"Well, are you rich?"

"No, but I ben rich wunst, and gwyne to be rich ag'in. Wunst I had foteen dollars, but I tuck to specalat'n', en got busted out."³⁷

So ran their talk, and Huck seemed a bit dubious. But days later, far down the river, a small amount of money came to them, and Jim gleefully explained it on the basis of the sign:

"Dah, now, Huck, what I tell you?—what I tell you up dah on Jackson Islan'? I *told* you I got a hairy breas', en what's de sign un it; en I *told* you I ben rich wunst, en gwineter to be rich ag'in, en it's come true; en heah she *is*! Dah, now! doan' talk to *me*—signs is *signs*, mine I tell you; en I knowed jis' 's well 'at I 'uz gwineter be rich ag'in as I's a-stannin' heah dis minute!"³⁸

The potency of human hair is a very ancient belief. In *Following the Equator* a missionary to India demonstrates to Mark Twain that Hindu legends, because of the enormity of power they attribute to their gods, make unavailing as a Christianizing influence even the famed Biblical example of the "strength" of hair:

... You saw that there was a supernatural property in the hair of Samson; for you perceived that when his hair was gone he was as other men.³⁹

A survival of this ancient superstition may be found in the familiar figurative language of modern times:

"... I wouldn't hurt a hair of your head for all the world.
..."⁴⁰

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 244.

³⁷ *Huckleberry Finn*, pp. 63 f.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 404.

³⁹ *Following the Equator*, I, 116.

⁴⁰ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 243.

When Mark Twain grows humorous at the expense of superstition it is not always apparent. Ordinarily when he refers to a superstition his deep-seated incredulity is present, but veiled. On occasion he is obviously ironic. The following instance is taken from what is alleged to be "Mr. Whymper's Narrative" of his ascent of the Matterhorn:

. . . . The wine-bags also fell to my lot to carry, and throughout the day, after each drink, I replenished them secretly with water, so that at the next halt they were found fuller than before! This was considered a good omen, and little short of miraculous.⁴¹

The origin of many of the folk beliefs of superstitious peoples may be found, as is well known, in the naïve explanations they have invented to account for natural phenomena. In *A Tramp Abroad* Mark Twain deplored—or pretends to deplore—the rapid disappearance of "popular antiquities" that was almost contemporary with his literary life.

. . . . We have not the reverent feeling for the rainbow that a savage has, because we know how it is made. We have lost as much as we gained by prying into that matter.⁴²

He allows as enlightened a person as a clipper-ship captain to hail the rainbow as a good omen.

" Toward evening saw a magnificent rainbow—the first we had seen. Captain said, 'Cheer up, boys; it's a prophecy—it's the bow of promise!'"⁴³

Further comment on the rainbow occurs in *Roughing It*:

. . . . What the sailors call "rain-dogs"—little patches of rainbow—are often seen drifting about the heavens in these latitudes,⁴⁴

In those two famous volumes which are frequently referred to as "manuals of boy lore," Mark Twain balances folklore and narrative in skillful combination. Occasionally, however, he seems to include a bit of quaint lore simply "for atmosphere," or because it has interested him. Or he will show boy nature more clearly by this means.

. . . . A little green worm came crawling over a dewy leaf, lifting two-t[h]irds of his body into the air from time to time and "sniffing around," then proceeding again—for he was measuring,

⁴¹ *A Tramp Abroad*, II, 149.

⁴² *Ibid.*, II, 170.

⁴³ *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg*, "My Debut as a Literary Person," p. 100. An excerpt from Henry Ferguson's log.

⁴⁴ *Op. cit.*, II, 244.

Tom said; and when the worm approached him, of its own accord, he sat as still as a stone, with his hopes rising and falling, by turns, as the creature still came toward him or seemed inclined to go elsewhere; and when at last it considered a painful moment with its curved body in the air and then came decisively down upon Tom's leg and began a journey over him, his whole heart was glad—for that meant that he was going to have a new suit of clothes—without the shadow of a doubt a gaudy piratical uniform.⁴⁵

An animal omen is explained in *The Prince and the Pauper* by the true prince:

" Moreover, I owe you thanks for a good omen; for when a king has fallen so low that the very rats do make a bed of him, it surely meaneth that his fortunes be upon the turn, since it is plain he can no lower go." ⁴⁶

Animal omens do not always presage good luck. Mark Twain seems to have made a rather complete study of dog portents:

" Presently a dog set up a long, lugubrious howl just outside—within ten feet of them. The boys clasped each other suddenly, in an agony of fright.

"Which of us does he mean?" gasped Huckleberry.

"I dono—peep through the crack. Quick!"

"No, *you*, Tom!"

"I can't—I can't *do* it, Huck!"

"Please, Tom. There 'tis again!"

"Oh, lordy, I'm thankful!" whispered Tom. "I know his voice. It's Bull Harbison."

"Oh, that's good—I tell you, Tom, I was most scared to death; I'd 'a' bet anything it was a *stray* dog."

The dog howled again. The boys' hearts sank once more.

Tom put his eye to the crack.

"Oh, Huck, it's A STRAY DOG!"

"Quick, Tom, quick! Who does he mean?"

"Huck, he must mean us both—we're right together."

"Oh, Tom, I reckon we're goners."

"Look, Hucky, look! He's got his *back* to us!"

Hucky looked, with joy in his heart.

"Well, he has, by jingoes! Did he before?"

"Yes, he did. But I, like a fool, never thought. Oh, this is bully, you know. *Now* who can he mean?"

The howling stopped.

That long, lugubrious howl rose on the night air again! They turned and saw the strange dog standing within a few feet of

⁴⁵ *Tom Sawyer*, pp. 121 f.

⁴⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 156.

where Potter was lying, and *facing* Potter, with his nose pointing heavenward.

"Oh, geeminy, it's *him*!" exclaimed both. . . . ⁴⁷

But this time it is Huck who voices a slight skepticism, and Tom who quotes the Negroes in support of the superstition:

"Say, Tom—they say a stray dog come howling around Johnny Miller's house, 'bout midnight, as much as two weeks ago; and a whipporwill come in and lit on the banisters and sung, the very same evening; and there ain't anybody dead there yet"

"Well, I know that. And suppose there ain't. Didn't Grace Miller fall in the kitchen fire and burn herself terrible the very next Saturday?"

"Yes, but she ain't *dead*. And what's more, she's getting better, too."

"All right, you wait and see. She's a goner, just as dead sure as Muff Potter's a goner. That's what the niggers say, and they know all about these kind of things, Huck." ⁴⁸

Apparently animal noises at night were almost always considered ominous:

. . . . I heard an owl, away off, who-whooing about somebody that was dead, and a whipporwill and a dog crying about somebody that was going to die; ⁴⁹

. . . . the deep baying of a hound floated up out of the distance, an owl answered with his sepulchral note. . . . ⁵⁰

. . . . And now the tresome chirping of a cricket that no human ingenuity could locate, began. Next the ghastly ticking of a death-watch in the wall at the bed's head made Tom shudder—it meant that somebody's days were numbered. Then the howl of a faroff dog rose on the night air, and was answered by a fainter howl from a remoter distance. . . . ⁵¹

A quiet cricket in a house is a good omen, but one "shrilling" or "chirping," is a prognostication of death.⁵² The hooting of the owl, while not definitely recorded as an unfavorable omen, is said to be "ominous" and "dismal":

. . . . The hooting of an owl came from over the hill—ominous sound. . . . ⁵³

. . . . dismal was the hoo-hooing of the owl and the wailing of the wolf, sent mourning by on the night wind.⁵⁴

. . . . The hooting of a distant owl was all the sound that troubled the dead stillness. . . . ⁵⁵

⁴⁷ *Tom Sawyer*, pp. 93 ff.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 95 f.

⁴⁹ *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 4.

⁵⁰ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 206.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁵² T. F. Thiselton Dyer, *Folk Lore of Shakespeare*, p. 237.

⁵³ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 235.

⁵⁴ *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, I, 113.

⁵⁵ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 82.

In the main, Mark Twain's omens and signs are portentous of actual happenings. "Nigger Jim's" weather forecasts by observations of birds could be depended upon:

Some young birds come along, flying a yard or two at a time and lighting. Jim said it was a sign it was going to rain. He said it was a sign when young chickens flew that way, and so he reckoned it was the same way when young birds done it. . . . ⁵⁶

Huck wanted to catch some of the birds, but Jim warned him against it in a manner characteristic of the universal transmission of traditon. In one paragraph Mark Twain presents a taboo, the effect of violating the taboo, and the manner by which the tradition has passed by word of mouth through four generations:

. . . . I was going to catch some of them, but Jim wouldn't let me. He said it was death. He said his father laid mighty sick once, and some of them caught a bird, and his old granny said his father would die, and he did. ⁵⁷

Jim's faith in his augury was so strong that he wished to move their little camp into a cave at once:

. . . . And, besides, he said them little birds had said it was going to rain, and did I want the things to get wet? ⁵⁸

Huck was willing enough to move into the cavern:

. . . . Pretty soon it darkened up, and begun to thunder and lighten; so the birds was right about it. Directly it begun to rain, and it rained like all fury, too, and I never see the wind blow so. . . . ⁵⁹

Huck, watching the storm in security, eating fish and corn-pone, says, "Jim, this is nice." And Jim reminds him, with a trace of reproof:

"Well, you wouldn't 'a' ben here 'f it hadn't 'a' ben for Jim. You'd 'a' ben down dah in de woods widout any dinner, en gittin' mos' drowned, too; dat you would, honey. Chickens knows when it's gwyne to rain, en so do de birds, chile." ⁶⁰

⁵⁶ *Huckleberry Finn*, pp. 62 f.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

VII

PROVERBS

In his use of proverbs Mark Twain is often merely allusive, assuming that the reader is familiar enough with certain maxims to make their complete statement unnecessary.

.... Give a dog a bad name, etc.¹
The first shall be last, etc.²
.... We laugh, and say, "Speak of the devil," and so forth, and there we drop it,³
.... enough early rising in it to make a man far more "healthy and wealthy and wise" than any one man has any right to be.⁴
.... and the man will have to rise early that catches it napping again.⁵
"It's bread cast upon the waters—it'll return after many days," said the old lady.⁶
.... And what a fortune for that kind man who set his bread afloat upon the waters!⁷
.... the dissolute Colonel who has reaped the harvest he sowed,⁸

In a few instances he purposely gives proverbs sly twists for humorous effects:

.... that calamity killed the mule that laid the golden egg—which is but a figurative expression and will be so understood.⁹

.... Every silver lining has a cloud behind it, as the poet says; and that remark has always cheered me, though I never could see any meaning to it. Everybody uses it, though, and everybody gets comfort out of it. I wish they would start something fresh. Come, now, let's cheer up; there's been as good fish in the sea as there are now.¹⁰

".... you know there ain't any country but what a prophet's an honor to, as the proverb says."¹¹

¹ *Roughing It*, I, 69.

² *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 229.

³ *Literary Essays*, "Mental Telegraphy," p. 116.

⁴ *A Tramp Abroad*, II, 171.

⁵ *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg*, p. 69.

⁶ *The Gilded Age*, I, 17.

⁷ *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg*, p. 5.

⁸ *The Gilded Age*, II, 163. In a quoted editorial, probably of his own manufacture, about Laura Hawkins, murderess.

⁹ *Ibid.*, I, 67.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, II, 207.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, I, 45.

Mark Twain draws his proverbs from sources too many and too scattered to trace in this study. In the following list (alphabetical, insofar as possible, to facilitate reference) classification has been made in two groups: (1) Maxims; (2) Metaphorical Proverbs.

Maxims

- for all things come to him who waits.¹²
 An Englishman does dearly love a lord,¹³
 proof once established is better left so.¹⁴
 boys will be boys,¹⁵
 Note that venerable proverb: Children and fools *always*
 speak the truth. . . .¹⁶
 It was according to the old saying, "Give a nigger an inch
 and he'll take an ell."¹⁷
 he laughs best who laughs last.¹⁸
 The axiom says, "History repeats itself."¹⁹
 But it is an ill wind that blows nobody good. . . .²⁰
 it never rains but it pours,²¹
 learning softeneth the heart and breedeth gentleness and
 charity.²²
 Life's on'y a fleetin' show, John, as the sayin' is. . . .²³
 The proverb says, "like master, like man";²⁴
 " man that is born of woman is of few days and full of
 trouble," as the Scripture says, and I reckon it's so. . . .²⁵
 It has been said that misfortunes never come one at a time, but
 in a body. . . .²⁶
 old fools is the biggest fools there is. . . .²⁷
 Procrastination is the thief of time. . . .²⁸
 prophecies boldly uttered never fall barren on super-
 stitious ears. . . .²⁹
 Spare the rod and spile the child, as the Good Book
 says. . . .³⁰

¹² *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, II, 131.

¹³ *The \$30,000 Bequest*, "Does the Race of Man Love a Lord?" p. 325.

¹⁴ *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg*, p. 25.

¹⁵ *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 390.

¹⁶ *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, "On the Decay of the Art of Lying," p. 361.

¹⁷ *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 123.

¹⁸ *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, "The Stolen White Elephant," p. 237.

¹⁹ *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, II, 176.

²⁰ *The Innocents Abroad*, I, 263.

²¹ *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 377.

²² *The Prince and the Pauper*, p. 22.

²³ *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, "Some Rambling Notes of an Idle Excursion," p. 245.

²⁴ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 205.

²⁵ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 3.

²⁶ *Joan of Arc*, I, 169.

²⁷ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 3.

²⁸ *The Innocents Abroad*, II, 144. This is used by Mark Twain as a fit motto for "The Legend of the Seven Sleepers."

²⁹ *Joan of Arc*, I, 111.

³⁰ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 3.

.... The proverb says, "The unknown is always great."
³¹
 We's doin' blame' well, en we better let blame' well alone,
 as de good book says.³²
 ".... Never give up the ship!"³³

Metaphorical Proverbs

.... a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush;³⁴
 Can't learn an old dog new tricks, as the saying is.
³⁵
 De Good Book say de burnt chile shun de fire.³⁶
 There's a saying that he that would cross a river twice in
 the same day in a boat, will do well to eat fish for luck, lest he
 have an accident.³⁷
 mad as a hare in this month of March,³⁸
 She was as simple-hearted and honest as the day was
 long,³⁹
 I reckon you're a kind of a singed cat, as the saying is—
 better'n you look.⁴⁰
 He was the feather that broke the camel's back.⁴¹
 This final feather broke the camel's back.⁴²
 the quicker a fresh-water fish is on the fire after he is
 caught the better he is;⁴³

It will be noted that in several instances colloquial usage and oral transmission have wrought variations in the wording of the standard forms.

³¹ *The Innocents Abroad*, II, 84.

³² *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 92. Popular belief incorrectly attributes to the Bible many sayings from entirely different sources.

³³ *The Gilded Age*, II, 207.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 114.

³⁵ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 3.

³⁶ *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, p. 85. "Nigger Jim" explains this proverb by saying: "Mars Tom, dey is sich a thing as learnin' by expe'ence."

³⁷ *Joan of Arc*, I, 261.

³⁸ *The Gilded Age*, II, 163.

³⁹ *Tom Sawyer*, p. 105.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁴¹ *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, I, 304.

⁴² *Tom Sawyer*, p. 97. In both this and the preceding example, Mark Twain swerves from established usage by substituting "feather" for "straw."

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

VIII

SUNDRY SUPERSTITIONS

In Mark Twain's works there are a considerable number of scattered and occasional references to unrelated customs, traditions, and superstitions, quite apart from the lore of ghosts, witches, luck, and omens which, in the foregoing pages, have been discussed at some length. These are here brought together and presented in alphabetical order.

Customs Connected with the Calendar

A single reference to All Fool's day is found:

April 1. This is the day upon which we are reminded of what we are on the other three hundred and sixty-four.

—*Pudd'nhead Wilson's Calendar*.¹

There are a number of allusions to the celebration of Christmas. In his *Autobiography* Clemens twice mentions the merry holiday:

. . . . in celebrating Christmas Eve around a Christmas tree in our house, Patrick came down the chimney (apparently) disguised as Saint Nicholas,²

He tells of his daughter Susy's amazement on first seeing a bearded man, of how she "came flying wide-eyed to her mother and said, 'Santa Claus has got loose.'"

In an account of the *Quaker City* excursion, he muses upon a visit to the alleged birthplace of the Christ:

I have no "meditations," suggested by this spot where the very first "Merry Christmas!" was uttered in all the world, and from whence the friend of my childhood, Santa Claus, departed on his first journey to gladden and continue to gladden roaring firesides on wintry mornings in many a distant land forever and forever.³

If on first thought one be alarmed by the adult Mr. Clemens' apparent swallowing of the Santa Claus legend "hook, line, and sinker," a moment's reflection will suggest, perhaps, that his concern was to preserve credulity in juvenile readers. Such a desire would be characteristic of Mark Twain.

In *A Tramp Abroad* he relates a colloquial version, inter-

¹ *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, p. 186.

² *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, II, 203.

³ *Ibid.*, II, 243.

⁴ *The Innocents Abroad*, II, 351.

perspersed with his own comments, of the St. Nicholas story:

.... This was the children's friend, Santa Claus, or St. Nicholas. There are some unaccountable reputations in the world. This saint's is an instance. He has ranked for ages as the peculiar friend of children, yet it appears he was not much of a friend to his own. He had ten of them, and when fifty years old he left them, and sought out as dismal a refuge from the world as possible, and became a hermit in order that he might reflect upon pious themes without being disturbed by the joyous and other noises from the nursery, doubtless.

.... St. Nicholas will probably have to go on climbing down sooty chimneys, Christmas eve, forever, conferring kindness on other people's children, to make up for deserting his own.
....⁵

Creation Story

Accounts of the early Mississippi Valley superstitions concerning creation are not numerous in Mark Twain's works—or, for that matter, in anyone's works. Huck Finn tells of the theories he and "Nigger Jim" propounded:

.... We had the sky up there, all speckled with stars, and we used to lay on our backs and look up at them, and discuss about whether they was made or only just happened. Jim he allowed they was made, but I allowed they happened; I judged it would have took too long to *make* so many. Jim said the moon could 'a' *laid* them; well, that looked kind of reasonable, so I didn't say nothing against it, because I've seen a frog lay most as many, so of course it could be done. We used to watch the stars that fell, too, and see them streak down. Jim allowed they'd got spoiled and was hove out of the nest.⁶

Once, flying over the Sahara, Tom Sawyer asked:

".... How *did* He come to make it?"
"Mars Tom, I b'lieve it uz jes like when you's buildin' a house; dey's allays a lot o' truck en rubbish lef' over. Now, den, it's my opinion hit was jest like dat—dat de Great Sahara warn't made at all, she jes' *happen*.'"⁷

Jim was negroid, and his explanation of the Sahara should have been authoritative, but Tom raised one of his characteristic questions:

".... How does it come that there was just exactly enough star-stuff, and none left over? How does it come there an't no sand-pile up there?"

To this Jim neatly countered:

"What's de Milky Way?—dat's what I want to know. What's de Milky Way?"⁸

⁵ *A Tramp Abroad*, II, 16.

⁶ *Huckleberry Finn*, pp. 165 f.

⁷ *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, p. 78.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

Cure

"Nigger Jim" tells Huck how to help cure rattlesnake bite:

. . . . Jim told me to chop off the snake's head and throw it away, and then skin the body and roast a piece of it. I done it, and he eat it and said it would help cure him. He made me take off the rattles and tie them around his wrist, too. He said that that would help. . . . ⁹

Divination

The "Duke" whom Huck and Jim picked up on their down-river cruise, "done other wonderful things, like finding water and gold with a 'divining-rod.'" ¹⁰ In *The Gilded Age*, Mark Twain tells of a similar divination in the coal regions of Pennsylvania:

The landlord at Ilium endeavored to persuade Philip to hire the services of a witch-hazel professor of that region, who could walk over the land with his wand and tell him infallibly whether it contained coal, and exactly where the strata ran. . . . ¹¹

Of great interest to Tom and Huck is a common river practice of another sort, that was used in locating the bodies of drowned persons. They are particularly absorbed in this instance, because they themselves are the objects of the divination:

. . . . There was a long silence, profound and unbroken; then a deep, sullen boom came floating down out of the distance.

They waited a time that seemed an age, and then the same muffled boom troubled the solemn hush.

. . . . The little steam ferryboat was about a mile below the village, drifting with the current. Her broad deck seemed crowded with people. There were a great many skiffs rowing about or floating with the stream in the neighborhood of the ferryboat, but the boys could not determine what the men in them were doing. Presently a great jet of white smoke burst from the ferryboat's side, and as it expanded and rose in a lazy cloud, that same dull throb of sound was borne to the listeners again.

"I know now!" exclaimed Tom; "somebody's drowned!"

"That's it!" said Huck; "they done that last summer, when Bill Turner got drowned; they shoot a cannon over the water, and that makes him come up to the top. Yes, and they take loaves of bread and put quicksilver in 'em and set 'em afloat, and

⁹ *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 73.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

¹¹ *The Gilded Age*, I, 295.

wherever there's anybody that's drowneded, they'll float right there and stop."

"Yes, I've heard about that," said Joe. "I wonder what makes the bread do that."

"Oh, it ain't the bread, so much," said Tom; "I reckon it's mostly what they say over it before they start it out."

"But they don't say anything over it," said Huck. "I've seen 'em and they don't."

"Well, that's funny," said Tom. "But maybe they say it to themselves. Of *couse* they do. Anybody might know that."

The other boys agreed that there was reason in what Tom said, because an ignorant lump of bread, uninstructed by an incantation, could not be expected to act very intelligently when sent upon an errand of such gravity.¹²

A year later Huck, hiding alone on the river bank, has a similar experience:

. . . . Well, I was dozing off again when I thinks I hears a deep sound of "boom!" away up the river. I rouses up, and rests on my elbow and listens; pretty soon I hears it again. I hopped up, and went and looked out at a hole in the leaves, and I see a bunch of smoke laying on the water a long ways up—about abreast the ferry. And there was the ferryboat full of people floating along down. I knowed what was the matter now. "Boom!" I see the white smoke squirt out of the ferryboat's side. You see, they was firing cannon over the water, trying to make my carcass come to the top.

. . . . So I set there and watched the cannon-smoke and listened to the boom. The river was a mile wide there, and it always looks pretty on a summer morning—so I was having a good enough time seeing them hunt for my remainders if I only had a bite to eat. Well, then I happened to think how they always put quicksilver in loaves of bread and float them off, because they always go right to the drowneded carcass and stop there. So, says I, I'll keep a lookout, and if any of them's floating around after me I'll give them a show. . . . A big double loaf come along, and I most got it with a long stick, but my foot slipped and she floated out further. Of course I was where the current set in the closest to the shore—I knowed enough for that. But by and by along comes another one, and this time I won. I took out the plug and shook out the little dab of quicksilver, and set my teeth in. It was "baker's bread"—what the quality eat; none of your low-down corn-pone.¹³

"Nigger Jim" had a "hair-ball" which he claimed possessed miraculous powers of divination. In fact, given the proper encouragement, it could foretell one's whole life.

Miss Watson's nigger, Jim, had a hair-ball as big as your fist, which had been took out of the fourth stomach of an ox, and he used to do magic with it. He said there was a spirit inside of it, and it knowed everything. So I went to him that night and told him pap was here again, for I found his tracks in the snow. What

¹² *Tom Sawyer*, pp. 125 ff.

¹³ *Huckleberry Finn*, pp. 51 f.

I wanted to know was, what he was going to do, and was he going to stay? Jim got out his hair-ball and said something over it, and then he held it up and dropped it on the floor. It fell pretty solid, and only rolled about an inch. Jim tried it again, and then another time, and it acted just the same. Jim got down on his knees, and put his ear against it and listened. But it warn't no use; he said it wouldn't talk. He said sometimes it wouldn't talk without money. I told him I had an old slick counterfeit quarter that warn't no good because the brass showed through the silver a little, and it wouldn't pass nohow, even if the brass didn't show, because it was so slick it felt greasy, and so that would tell on it every time. (I reckoned I wouldn't say nothing about the dollar I got from the judge.) I said it was pretty bad money, but maybe the hair-ball would take it, because maybe it wouldn't know the difference. Jim smelt it and bit it and rubbed it, and said he would manage so the hair-ball would think it was good. . . . so anybody in town would take it in a minute, let alone a hair-ball.

Jim put the quarter under the hair-ball, and got down and listened again. This time he said the hair-ball was all right. He said it would tell my whole fortune if I wanted it to. I says, go on. So the hair-ball talked to Jim, and Jim told it to me. He says: "Yo' ole father doan' know yit what he's a-gwyne to do. Sometimes he spec he'll go 'way, en den ag'in he spec he'll stay. De bes' way is to res' easy en let de ole man take his own way. Dey's two angels hoverin' roun' 'bout him. One uv 'em is white en shiny, en t'other one is black. De white one gits him to go right a little while, den de black one sail in en bust it all up. A body can't tell yit which one gwyne to fetch him at de las'. But you is all right. You gwyne to have considable trouble in yo' life, en considable joy. Sometimes you gwyne tō git hurt, en sometimes you gwyne to git sick; but every time you's gwyne to git well ag'in. Dey's two gals flyin' 'bout you in yo' life. One uv 'em's light en t'other one is dark. One is rich en t'other is po'. You's gwyne to marry de po' one fust en de rich one by en by. You wants to keep 'way fum de water as much as you kin, en don't run no resk, 'kase it's down in de bills dat you's gwyne to git hung." ¹⁴

It is obvious that Jim is in the secret of the hair-ball and that he will not let it talk without money. How he could be high priest of this fetish, know its secret, and yet retain his deep-rooted faith in every superstition that came to his attention, is scarcely explicable even when one considers his ignorance and his racial background.

Huck's comment on the hair-ball's prediction is brief:

When I lit my candle and went up to my room that night there sat pap—his own self! ¹⁵

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 23 ff.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

Drowning in the Mississippi

Mark Twain commented in a footnote in *Life on the Mississippi* on a superstition current in 1837 concerning that river.

There was a foolish superstition of some little prevalence in that day that the Mississippi would neither buoy up a swimmer nor permit a drowned person's body to rise to the surface.

He says of Captain Marryat's description: "Receive, now the emotions of Captain Marryat, R. N., author of sea tales, writing in 1837." He then added the footnote to explain a "foolish superstition" about the river. Captain Marryat wrote, in part:

" It is a furious, rapid, desolating torrent, loaded with alluvial soil; and few of those who are received into its waters ever rise again, or can support themselves long upon its surface without assistance from some friendly log. . . . " ¹⁶

Does the firing of the cannon mentioned in the foregoing ¹⁷ counteract this superstition? Did it have its origin in an attempt to nullify it?

Riddles

Huck Finn's first acquaintance with riddles came while he was changing his pants for a pair belonging to Buck Grangerford, an urchin of his own age:

. . . . he asked me where Moses was when the candle went out. I said I didn't know; I hadn't heard about it before, no way.

"Well, guess," he says.

"How'm I going to guess," says I, "when I never heard tell of it before?"

"But you can guess, can't you? It's just as easy."

"Which candle?" I says.

"Why, any candle," he says.

"I don't know where he was," says I; "where was he?"

"Why, he was in the *dark*! That's where he was!"

"Well, if you knowed where he was, what did you ask me for?"

"Why, blame it, it's a riddle, don't you see? " ¹⁸

As will be seen, this is not a true riddle, but belongs to the large class of those conundrums which depend on a "catch" for the entertainment.

¹⁶ *Life on the Mississippi*, p. 227. Mark Twain gave a series of descriptions of the Mississippi River, showing how various beholders had reacted emotionally to the great stream—from La Salle in 1682 to Captain Marryat in 1837.

¹⁷ See *supra*, 71 f.

¹⁸ *Huckleberry Finn*, pp. 136 f.

Sign of the Cross

In Mark Twain the protective character of the sign of the cross is of peculiar significance. Huck's pap, the town drunkard, adopted the most interesting use of the sign:

... There was a cross in the left boot-heel made with big nails, to keep off the devil.¹⁹

"Everybody crossed himself in a grisly fright,"²⁰ Sir Boss, in *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, tells the reader when an old woman utters a curse in Morgan Le Fay's castle.

Joan of Arc prevailed upon an English soldier to make her a rough cross upon which she might gaze while being consumed by the flames;²¹ and the young Count de Laval said that at an earlier time,

"... when she was ready to mount her great black horse he reared and plunged and would not let her. Then she said, 'Lead him to the cross.' This cross was in front of the church close by. So they led him there. Then she mounted, and he never budged, any more than if he had been tied. . . ." ²²

Clemens describes a "beautiful cross" in Charing Village, outside London, which was "built there by a bereaved king of earlier days" ²³—days that preceded the bringing of Christianity to the kingdoms by the Romish monks.

The conversation of Tom and Huck while treasure-hunting in the cavern shows the superstitious awe in which crosses were held in the Mississippi Valley a generation or so ago:

"Tom, it's a cross!"

"Now where's your Number Two? 'Under the cross,' hey?"

...

Huck stared at the mystic sign awhile, and then said with a shaky voice:

"Tom, le's git out of here!"

.

"... Injun Joe's ghost ain't a-going to come around where there's a cross!"

.

"Tom, I didn't think of that. But that's so. It's luck. . . ." ²⁴

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

²⁰ *A Connecticut Yankee*, p. 139.

²¹ *Literary Essays*, "Saint Joan of Arc," pp. 374 f.; *Joan of Arc*, II, 279.

²² *Ibid.*, I, 291.

²³ *The Prince and the Pauper*, p. 10.

²⁴ *Tom Sawyer*, pp. 274 f.

Tom finally persuades Huck to see in the cross a sign favoring them rather than auguring against them, and the treasure-hunt proceeds, with Huck's joyful, "It's luck for us, that cross is."²⁵

Sworn Covenant

Boy-like, Tom and Huck must "swear to keep mum" about their knowledge of Injun Joe's guilt of murder. No ordinary swearing will do. Here Mark Twain introduces the ancient folk belief in the potency of blood to attest an oath:

" . . . Now, look-a-here, Tom, less take and swear to one another—that's what we got to do—swear to keep mum."

"I'm agreed. It's the best thing. Would you just hold hands and swear that we—"

"Oh, no, that wouldn't do for this. That's good enough for little rubbishy common things—specially with gals, cuz *they* go back on you anyway, and blab if they get in a huff—but there orter be writing 'bout a big thing like this. And blood."

Tom's whole being applauded this idea. It was deep, and dark, and awful; the hour, the circumstances, the surroundings, were in keeping with it. He picked up a clean pine shingle that lay in the moonlight, took a little fragment of "red keel" out of his pocket, got the moon on his work, and painfully scrawled these lines, . . .

"Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer swears they will keep mum about this and they wish they may Drop down dead in their tracks if they ever tell and Rot."

. . . . Tom unwound the thread from one of his needles, and each boy pricked the ball of his thumb and squeezed out a drop of blood. In time, after many squeezes, Tom managed to sign his initials, using the ball of his little finger for a pen. Then he showed Huckleberry how to make an H and an F, and the oath was complete. They buried the shingle close to the wall, with some dismal ceremonies and incantations, and the fetters that bound their tongues were considered to be locked and the key thrown away.²⁶

Sympathetic Indication

Ancient traditions relate that wounds of a murdered person bleed afresh when the murderer approaches the body. Several instances of this occur in Shakespearean dramas; hence it is not improbable that Mark Twain was unconsciously combining the older tradition with the superstitions of his day when he introduced in *Tom Sawyer* the following incident:

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 275.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 91 f.

Injun Joe helped to raise the body of the murdered man and put it in a wagon for removal; and it was whispered through the shuddering crowd that the wound bled a little! The boys thought that this happy circumstance would turn suspicion in the right direction; but they were disappointed, for more than one villager remarked:

"It was within three feet of Muff Potter when it done it." ²⁷

Telling the Bees

A survival generally thought to be European is that bees must be told if their owner dies, or they, too, will soon experience death. Apparently the notion was current in Negro folklore of the Mississippi Valley in Mark Twain's time:

..... And he [Jim] said if a man owned a beehive and that man died, the bees must be told about it before sun-up the next morning, or else the bees would all weaken down and quit work and die. ²⁸

As in countless instances, the folklore item seemed to suggest to Mark Twain an opportunity for some characteristic jabbing quirk that heightened the narrative. For instance, immediately following the preceding quotation occurs the sentence:

..... Jim said bees wouldn't sting idiots; but I didn't believe that, because I had tried them lots of times myself, and they wouldn't sting me. ²⁹

From the foregoing it will be seen that Mark Twain's folklore presents a happy combination of the first-hand knowledge which he absorbed spontaneously in his early environment, the second-hand information gained from wide and intelligent inquiry during his later travels, and what might be called the third-hand or literary knowledge gleaned from the many books to which his lively interest in the subject directed him. A comparison of the folklore in such books as *Following the Equator*, *The Innocents Abroad*, *A Tramp Abroad*, *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc*, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, and *The Prince and the Pauper* with standard compilations shows that his second-hand and book-derived traditions and superstitions may be depended upon for a high degree of accuracy. But it is in the

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

²⁸ *Huckleberry Finn*, p. 63.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

Negro and Mississippi Valley lore of such books as *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* that Mark Twain has made his real and significant contribution to the history of American folk-thought. To these the highest degree of authenticity may be ascribed, and with the present wider dissemination of knowledge and rapid decrease of superstition the multiple varied items of sectional folklore recorded by Mark Twain are and will continue to be of increasing importance.

.

APPENDIX

THE GOLDEN ARM

(with Mark Twain's directions for making the telling effective)

Once 'pon a time dey wuz a monsus mean man, en he live 'way out in de prairie all 'lone by hisself, 'cep'n he had a wife. En bimeby she died, en he tuck en toted her way out dah in de prairie en buried her. Well, she had a golden arm—all solid gold, fum de shoulder down. He wuz pow'ful mean—pow'ful; en dat night he couldn't sleep, caze he want dat golden arm so bad.

When it come midnight he couldn't stan' it no mo'; so he git up, he did, en tuck his lantern en shoved out thoo de storm en dug her up en got de golden arm; en he bent his head down 'gin de win', en plowed en plowed thoo de snow. Den all of a sudden he stop (make a considerable pause here, and look startled, and take a listening attitude) en say: "My *lan'*, what's dat?"

En he listen—en listen—en de win' say (set your teeth together and imitate the wailing and wheezing singsong of the wind), "Bzzz-z-zzz"—en den, way back yonder whah de grave is, he hear a *voice!*—he hear a voice all mix' up in de win'—can't hardly tell 'em 'part—"Bzzz—zzz—W-h-o—g-o-t—m-y—g-o-l-d-e-n *arm?*" (You must begin to shiver violently now.)

En he begin to shiver en shake, en say, "Oh, my! Oh, my lan'!" en de win' blow de lantern out, en de snow en sleet blow in his face en mos' choke him, en he start a-plowin' knee-deep towards home mos' dead, he so sk'yerd—en pooty soon he hear de voice agin, en (pause) it 'us comin' *after* him! "Bzzz—zzz—zzz—W-h-o—g-o-t—m-y—g-o-l-d-e-n—*arm?*"

When he git to de pasture he hear it agin—closter now, en a-comin'!—a-comin' back dah in de dark en de storm—(repeat the wind and the voice). When he git to de house he rush up-stairs en jump in de bed en kiver up, head and years, en lay dah shiverin' en shakin'—en den way out dah he hear it *agin!*—en a-comin'! En bimeby he hear (pause—awed,

listening attitude) — pat — pat — pat — *hit's a-comin' upstairs!* Den he hear de latch, en he *know* it's in de room!

Den pooty soon he know it's *a-stannin' by de bed!* (Pause.) Den — he know it's *a-bendin' down over him* — en he cain't skasely git his breath! Den—den—he seem to feel someth'n, *c-o-l-d*, right down 'most agin his head! (Pause.)

Den de voice say, *right at his year*—“*W-h-o—g-o-t—m-y—g-o-l-d-e-n arm?*” (You must wail it out very plaintively and accusingly; then you stare steadily and impressively into the face of the farthest-gone auditor — a girl, preferably — and let that awe-inspiring pause begin to build itself in the deep hush. When it has reached exactly the right length, jump suddenly at that girl and yell, “*You've got it!*”

If you've got the *pause* right, she'll fetch a dear little yelp and spring right out of her shoes. But you *must* get the pause right; and you will find it the most troublesome and aggravating and uncertain thing you ever undertook.¹

¹ *The \$30,000 Bequest*, “How to Tell a Story,” pp. 268 ff.

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ROBERT JEPHSON (1736-1803)
A STUDY OF HIS LIFE AND WORKS

BY MARTIN SEVERIN PETHESON, A.M.

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PREFACE

The name of Robert Jephson, an Irish dramatist who wrote plays for the London and the Dublin stage during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, appears occasionally in critical commentaries dealing with that period. In the present study I have attempted to bring together the available material pertaining to his life and work. The investigation revealed to me, as I hope it will reveal to the reader, the character and the standing of a literary man now forgotten but in his own day important. Jephson is interesting because he tried, apparently, to stem the tide of eighteenth-century comedies, offering, in the stead of these brilliant and popular pieces, tragedies in the Gothic vein. His efforts were not entirely unsuccessful.

This study was begun at Columbia University under Charles Harold Gray, now a professor in the English Department of Bowdoin. I am indebted to him for counsel and encouragement and for the initial impetus to my investigation. To Professor Gray and to Louise Pound, Professor of English at the University of Nebraska, who has given me valuable assistance in the revision of my study, I express my gratitude.

MARTIN SEVERIN PETERSON

University of Nebraska

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ROBERT JEPSON (1736-1803) A STUDY OF HIS LIFE AND WORKS

INTRODUCTION

Readers of English dramatic literature of the last half of the eighteenth century may have run across the name of Robert Jephson, an Irish playwright who enjoyed as much fame in his day, after the production of his first blank-verse tragedy, *Braganza*, as Richard Cumberland, his contemporary, and with whom, "as a regular provider for the stage," his name is linked.¹ Who was Robert Jephson? What was his literary reputation? Posterity, calmly and eternally, has assigned him to obscurity; yet, in the minds of some of his illustrious contemporaries, no such fate seemed to await him. Horace Walpole, writing to Jephson from Arlington Street after the triumph of *Braganza*, confesses his admiration for the new author:

I will venture to say that *Braganza* will always charm more when read, than when seen; for I doubt there never will be found a whole set of actors, together, who can do it full justice.²

In the same pleasant letter he awards the play the high honor of being "the work of a master-poet"³ and assures Jephson that "no poet we have excels you in harmony." Another contemporary, David Garrick, places him "high on our dramatic list," and, in the letters that Jephson wrote to Garrick during their lifelong friendship, one can discern through Jephson's conventional modesty, compliments of even a higher order. Arthur Murphy hails Jephson as "warm from Shakespeare's school" in his prologue to *Braganza*, and Campbell, Mrs. Siddon's biographer, finds him "graceful and touching."⁴ Mrs. Siddons herself, more conservatively, thought the plays of Jephson "very passable modern tragedies." In *Braganza* she played the part of the Duchess, and

¹ S. T. Williams, *Richard Cumberland, His Life and Works* (New Haven, 1917), p. 251.

² Helen Toynbee, *Letters of Horace Walpole* (Oxford, 1903-1905), I, 246.

³ *Ibid.*, I, 245.

⁴ T. Campbell, *Life of Mrs. Siddons* (London, 1834), p. 146.

in the later plays she had like important rôles. Her tempered enthusiasm may indicate a weakness in the dramaturgy of the tragedies.

In these several opinions some hint of the reputation of Robert Jephson, tragic dramatist, political satirist, and poet, is contained. The life of Jephson, which we now take up, is that of a man who mixed considerably in the world, especially with the literati of London and Dublin, conceived an ambition to write tragedy, and by one contemporary, at least, was judged "the best, if not the only author of tragedies" of his time.⁵

I

THE LIFE OF JEPHSON

Robert Jephson was born in Dublin about the year 1736.⁶ He was the son of an obscure clergyman, William Jephson, who was the rector of Ray, a small parish on the outskirts of Dublin.⁷ He died in 1765, leaving four children of whom Robert was the youngest.⁸

Of the early life of Robert Jephson we have but slender knowledge. We know that he attended Ryder's Grammar School in Dublin and that he was a schoolfellow of Edmond Malone's, a few years later, at Dr. Roger Ford's school in Molesworth Street, "a school of great reputation."⁹ A significant biographical fact comes to light in connection with Jephson's attendance at Dr. Ford's school. In the private theatricals performed at this school, both Edmond Malone and Robert Jephson took leading parts. This is our first authentic record of Jephson's contact with dramatics. An excerpt from Sir James Prior's *Life of Edmond Malone* throws more light on this early association with the stage:

⁵ *The Private Correspondence of David Garrick* (London, 1831-32), I, Preface.

⁶ *Dictionary of National Biography*, p. 287; for an earlier date, 1734, see Sir J. T. Gilbert, *History of the City of Dublin*, II, 1206.

⁷ Sir James Prior, *Life of Edmond Malone* (London, 1860), p. 77.

⁸ *The Gentleman's Magazine*, LXVIII, 1152.

⁹ Sir J. T. Gilbert, *History of the City of Dublin* (Dublin and London, 1861), III, 262.

A favorite amusement of the boys was performing plays. In 1749, *Julius Caesar* was brought out, two of the Jephsons taking the parts of Brutus and Cassius; and it is believed in his instance (Malone's) as with Jephson, Shakespeare and the drama were never afterwards forgotten.¹⁰

From Dr. Ford's school in Molesworth Street, Jephson went to Trinity College. We may assume that he went there directly from the school in Molesworth Street because in the year 1749 he acted in *Julius Caesar*, as we have just noted, and in 1750 he was entered in Trinity College.¹¹ At Trinity College we know that he studied under a Dr. Ratcliffe, but what Jephson intended to prepare for, cannot be ascertained. At any rate, he left Trinity without a degree to enter the army, where he obtained a commission in the 73rd regiment of foot, on the Irish Establishment. He served for some time at Bellisle, but retired from his regiment and returned to Ireland, having been unable to withstand the tropical climate of the West Indies.¹²

The following impression of Jephson at this period of his life presents an interesting picture of the young Captain:

He displayed good natural parts, well improved by education; he spoke pleasingly, his language was good, and he had a vein of satirical humour, very agreeable to all but those against whom it was pointed.¹³

Soon after his return from the West Indies to Ireland, we find Jephson proceeding to London, "the general mart for disposable talent."¹⁴

In England, Jephson took up residence at Hampton Court as a guest of William Gerard Hamilton, called "single-speech Hamilton" from a very able speech delivered in Parliament during his first term in the House of Commons. At Hampton Court, Jephson had the opportunity of associating with many prominent men of the time, among them Dr. Johnson, who was a sort of literary adviser to Hamilton, Edmund Burke, Charles Townshend, later Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, David

¹⁰ Prior, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

¹¹ Gilbert, *op. cit.*, II, 1206

¹² Prior, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

¹³ *Biographia Dramatica* (London, 1812), I,² 398 f

¹⁴ Prior, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

Garrick, who became a life-long friend of Jephson's, Goldsmith, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Burney.¹⁵

With two of these men, Edmund Burke and David Garrick, Jephson, during his life in England from 1760 to 1765, seems to have been on the most intimate terms. Some record of his friendship with them is available.

A pension of three hundred pounds, which Jephson enjoyed until his death in 1803, was indirectly procured for him by Edmund Burke. In March, 1763, Hamilton conferred on Burke for literary labors in his (Hamilton's) behalf, a pension of three hundred pounds. Sometime early in 1765, Hamilton, having other use for the pension, suggested that Burke make over the pension to himself. Burke, considering the labor that he had devoted to Hamilton's literary ambition, refused. Finally, however, Hamilton being persistent and Burke having no recourse, he determined to settle the matter once and for all by turning the troublesome pension over to Hamilton's attorney, Mr. Colthurst, and to discontinue all relations with Hamilton.

Captain Jephson, who was in all probability much in need of funds at this period of his life, applied to Burke for this pension. But Burke, who was determined to make the return of it a protest against Hamilton's conduct toward him, refused. This is evident from a letter Burke wrote Jephson during the negotiations with Hamilton with reference to the annuity.¹⁶ Jephson's function in this affair was not purely that of an intermediary, as the subsequent letter and later developments will show:

Tuesday, Feb 26th, 1763.

Dear Jephson:

I waited at home Friday and Saturday last until dinner time, in hopes that Mr. Colthurst, agreeably to what you mentioned from Mr. Hamilton, would call on me to settle the affair of the pension, so as to *assure it to Mr. Hamilton, in the most satisfactory manner*. Mrs. Burke has told me you intended to call yesterday, and I waited for you. As I had not seen Mr. Colthurst or you, I inquired the method usual in such transactions, and I am informed that it is very easy and expeditious, that, upon being properly authorized, the people of the Treasury in Ireland have a short instrument, by which they transfer the pensions at a

¹⁵ Sir James Prior, *Memoir of the Life and Character of Burke* (London, 1826), p. 89.

¹⁶ *Correspondence of Burke* (London, 1848), II, 59-65.

trifling charge. Mr. Hamilton will mention this to Mr. Colthurst, and I shall be ready to call upon him (Colthurst), or to see him here, whenever he thinks it convenient to send over the proper powers for making this transfer. If Mr. Colthurst thinks any other way more eligible, on seeing him, I shall be very glad to come into it, having no choice in the mode of the conveyance.

I am, dear Jephson, yours, &

Edm. Burke¹⁷

The pension was actually turned over to Colthurst by Burke, but this being tantamount (since Colthurst was Hamilton's attorney in the matter) to turning it over to Hamilton, it was subsequently turned over to Jephson by Hamilton himself. The whole affair caused considerable comment and discussion, and Burke was generally sympathized with for his position in the matter. The following note, for its reference to Jephson, is worth inclusion:

9th May, 1865.
Dublin Castle.

We are told here that Mr. Secretary Hamilton *and his genus*, Mr. Burke, have quarrelled to such a degree that Mr. Burke has actually given up his pension of 300 pounds per annum rather than continue obliged to him, and that it is assigned over to a Mr. Jephson, who lives with Mr. Hamilton. Is this true?¹⁸

With David Garrick Jephson appears to have been on excellent terms, and throughout his life Garrick conferred substantial favors upon the dramatist, reciprocated in some measure by Jephson when he later came to occupy a position of some influence in the literary and political world of his time.

In 1763, several years before the captain had attained fame as a dramatist, he was "befriended in a substantial manner" by Garrick. Once when Jephson was acutely embarrassed financially, the famous actor loaned him five hundred pounds.¹⁹ In the correspondence between Garrick and Jephson with reference to this loan something of the character of each may be read. When Garrick was preparing to go abroad in 1766, for some years, and was settling his affairs to that end, he wrote Jephson and proposed "some shape of

¹⁷ *Correspondence of Burke*, I, 62.

¹⁸ Prior, *Burke*, p. 117.

¹⁹ Prior, *Malone*, p. 77.

formal security"²⁰—a fair request, seemingly. But the sensitive Jephson resented it greatly and so expressed himself. Garrick, thereupon, posted him a rather sharp letter and quickly brought home to Jephson the justice of the proposal. It follows:

May 8th, 1765.

Dear Sir:

I thought I should have seen you last week, as I told you I should then dispose of my papers. I thought, too, that you had fixed about that time to be with me. I waited till yesterday for you. I have done what I promised in regard to the mentioning our transaction in my will. The more I think of this matter between us, the less I am able to account for your particular diffidence. I wish your next friend may be as much more able to serve you, as more deserving of your confidence; and I wish that I could not remember that you have withheld the only proof that you could give me that our confidence was mutual.

I am, sir, your most humble servant,

David Garrick²¹

It is evident from this letter that Jephson, true to form, had broken an appointment—in this instance with Garrick to settle the matter of a substantial personal loan. But no apology is contained in the letter bearing the same date as Garrick's, that follows.

London, May 8th, 1765.

Mr. Jephson to Mr. Garrick

Dear Sir:

As it is uncertain when, if at any time, I may have an opportunity of conversing with you on a subject in which I am greatly interested, I beg you will excuse the liberty of mentioning it to you in this manner.

Since your leaving England, I have often considered many circumstances of the transaction between us which a little preceded that time, and could not forbear censuring myself, very severely, for everything in my conduct which carried the most distant appearance of mistrust in your friendship, at a time when I had so little reason to doubt it, from a voluntary instance on your part of uncommon generosity and confidence.

Many things at that time deceived me, which I cannot now explain, but chiefly the consciousness of my own inability to discharge so considerable a debt, if the power of demanding it fell into other hands but your own, made me, for the first time listen to a caution, which has been in its consequences, as disagreeable to me as any surmise as to what occasioned it may have been to you.

²⁰ Percy Fitzgerald, *Life of David Garrick* (London, 1899), pp. 438-44.

²¹ *Private Correspondence of David Garrick*, I, 183.

Hereupon he offers Garrick his bond, and says that it will "in no wise lessen the sense I have always entertained for you", although his own principles, he assures Garrick, would prompt him, when it became possible, to repay it with the "utmost thankfulness."

He writes further:

Many reasons induce me to wish myself re-established in the favorable opinion you formerly had of me! I have always received the greatest pleasure and advantage from your conversation and friendship, and there is nothing a temper less liberal than yours could require, which I would not acquiesce in for that purpose; if my own imagination could suggest anything more likely to accomplish it, than what I have now done, you may depend on it, it should not be left untried . . . ²²

Jephson's reply seems to have bridged successfully the threatened break in their relations. Moreover, we have amicable mention of the debt on Jephson's part in a letter of later date, and a final squaring of the account after the London production of *Braganza*. Thus, it may be concluded that the intentions of Captain Jephson were good, even if his pride, perhaps, sounds a trifle false.

For the next few years there is a silence regarding Jephson. We do not know definitely what he was doing. It is probable that he was filling some position in the London theatre. An incident in connection with his securing the favor of Lord Townshend lends credibility to this belief. His meeting with Lord Townshend was significant in that it led to Jephson's being appointed Master of the Horse to Lord Townshend's administration of the King's affairs in Ireland. According to O'Keefe the meeting came about in the following way:

One night, when the play in which he was acting was over and several noblemen including Lord Townshend were about, Garrick said to the latter who was shortly to go to Ireland as the Lord Lieutenant, "My lord, here's a young spark so plagues us behind the scenes, night after night, always troublesome—I wish you would take him with you over to Ireland or anywhere out of our way. Lord Townshend took the good-natured hint, spoke to the youth, who stood near, and gave him a handsome appointment in Dublin Castle."²³

²² *Private Correspondence of David Garrick*, I, 182.

²³ *Recollections of John O'Keefe* (Philadelphia, 1827), II, 83.

This would seem to indicate that during Jephson's years in London the theatre was an important part of his interest.

Sir James Prior tells the story of Jephson's meeting with the future Lord Lieutenant a little differently:

He was an admirable mimic and had social qualifications. He was introduced to Lord Townshend, then a member of the Ministry, and imitated on one occasion the Duke of Newcastle, Lord North, Lord Northington, Aldermen Beckford and Glober. Charles Townshend, in a fit of enthusiasm, embraced Jephson and vowed to make him his secretary. Later he did make him Master of the Horse. A seat in Parliament followed.²⁴

Here, again, is evidence supporting the assumption that Jephson's interest during this period was in the stage. Mimicry, in the age of Sheridan, was a popular art, attaining its highest perfection in Samuel Foote, who at one time, in a Dublin theatre, perhaps in the sight of Jephson, imitated a dull, pompous Dublinite, George Faulkner, the publisher. But whatever his inclinations in regard to the theatre of the time may have been, Captain Jephson upon being made Master of the Horse returned to Dublin in 1767 to take up his duties with his benefactor, Lord Townshend.

Assured, now, of a substantial position in life at Dublin Castle, Jephson took unto himself a wife, in the person of Jane Barry, the daughter of Sir Edward Barry, a "professor of physics" in Trinity College, Dublin. Sir Edward was a physician of high reputation in Dublin, one of the founders of the "Physico-Historical Society," a Physician-General of the Army of Ireland, and the author of a treatise on *Wines of the Ancients*. His son, Dr. Nathaniel Barry, was the family physician of Captain Jephson.²⁵

Of Jephson's life in Dublin we know a great deal. The following excerpts give us the broad outline of his life at Dublin Castle:

In the society of the castle and its chief, amid the wits, talents and hospitality which then shone pre-eminent in Dublin, he found the position fitted above all others for that species of enjoyment where the flow of the soul was aided by liberal streams of claret and whiskey punch.²⁷

²⁴ Prior, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

²⁵ Gilbert, *op. cit.*, II, 161.

²⁶ Gilbert, *op. cit.*, III, 221.

²⁷ Prior, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

He, the author, was much caressed and sought after by several of the first societies of Dublin, as he possessed much wit and pleasantry, and, when not overcome by the spleen, was extremely amusing and entertaining.²⁸

But Captain Jephson was not merely an ornament to Dublin Castle. He soon proved his usefulness to Lord Townshend's administration by the display of a distinct gift of satire. The first literary effort of Jephson's that we have record of is evidence of his gift; it is entitled *The Bachelor*, and signed with the nom-de-plume "Geoffrey Wagstaffe." Gilbert, whose voluminous history of social Dublin, late eighteenth-century Dublin, recounts so many interesting side-lights on personalities, gives considerable space to the article mentioned above and to others in the brilliant series that followed. Gilbert's account of *An Epistle to Gorges Edmund Howard*, Jephson's most important prose-satire is well worth inclusion:

At the sign of Mercury on the western side of Parliament Street, within four doors of Essex Gate was the shop of James Hoey, a young Catholic bookseller and publisher, son of James Hoey, of Skinner's Row, the partner of George Faulkner. Hoey's newspaper, called *The Mercury*, became the organ of the Irish Government during the viceroyalty of Lord Townshend from 1767 to 1772. *The Mercury* was published thrice a week and in it were inserted all the Government notices and proclamations. Its principle contributors were Richard Marley, Dean of Ferns, Robert Jephson, the dramatist and wit; the Rev. Mr. Simcox, appointed in 1772, Rector of Fecullen; Captain John Courtenay, subsequently a commissioner of the English Treasury, and Dennis, one of the chaplains of Lord Townshend.

A series of well-written papers, entitled *The Bachelor* signed "Geoffrey Wagstaffe" appeared in *The Mercury*, which discharged perpetual volleys of satires and epigrams against Dr. Charles Lucas and the "Committee for conducting the Free Press," as the editors of the *Freeman's Journal* styled themselves. The latter, irritated at being lampooned as a "Puritan Committee," declared that the writers in *The Mercury* were a knot of Jesuits employed by Hoey, a popish printer, to subvert the State; and added that his sign of Hermes, the flying thief, correctly typified the principles of the paper. The contest was maintained with much wit and talent on both sides. Faulkner and Howard fell victims to the ridicule of Jephson.²⁹

The Freeman's Journal, the journal referred to above, became the organ in 1770 of Flood, Grattan, and the other

²⁸ H. Hardy, *Life of Lord Charlemont* (London, 1812), p. 363.

²⁹ Gilbert, *op. cit.*, II, 26.

opponents of Lord Townshend's administration. Lord Townshend was defended by Jephson and Simcox in Hoey's *Mercury*.³⁰

The Faulkner mentioned is George Faulkner, the book-seller and publisher, the proprietor and editor of *The Dublin Journal*. He was a friend of Dean Swift's who considered him "the printer most in vogue, and a great undertaker, perhaps too great a one."³¹ His paper, *The Dublin Journal*, was apparently more or less hostile to the Administration, although earlier, Faulkner is known to have been on intimate terms with Lord Chesterfield (Lord Lieutenant, 1745-1746). The Penal Code, directed against the Catholics, and adhered to by the Townshend Administration, doubtless accounts for Faulkner's temperate hostility.³²

Howard, to whom the epistle was addressed, was an attorney in Dublin who had accumulated a fortune from his profession and had obtained various official appointments. He was the author of a quantity of wretched plays and verse, his ambition being to shine as a poet, apparently a prevalent weakness of the age. Notwithstanding the perpetual failure of his productions, he persisted in continuing to publish them, and his vanity subjected him to the barbs of Dublin wits, many of whom, according to himself, were "the Judas-like guests at his own table." A continuous fire of sarcasm from the columns of Hoey's *Mercury*, widened the breach between Faulkner and Howard, both of whom, to their great dismay, were suddenly made the laughing-stock of the whole city, in 1771, by the appearance in *The Mercury* of the satire, mentioned earlier, "An Epistle to Gorges Edmond Howard, Esq.; with Notes, Explanatory, Critical, and Historical. By George Faulkner, Esq., an alderman."

Robert Jephson, the chief author of this great hoax, on the day before the appearance of his "Epistle," dined with a large party at Faulkner's house. His consternation may be imagined when his host, rising, solemnly informed his guests of

³⁰ *Ibid.*, I, 294.

³¹ Gilbert, *op cit.*, II, 31.

³² *Ibid.*, II, 39.

the intended publication, and then called upon them to drink to the health of its author.

The piece itself passed through nine editions and was considered one of the wittiest satires ever printed in Ireland. The *Epistle*, in verse, bears but a small proportion of the length, the commentaries, closely parodying the style of the phlegmatic Faulkner, being the chief part. The following description of Faulkner affords a good example of the style of that worthy and of the powers of satire possessed by Jephson:

He hath lived with the first wits of the present age in great credit, and upon a footing of much intimacy and great kindness. He is well-known to have been the particular friend of the Dean of St. Patrick's, and at this moment, corresponds with the Earl of Chesterfield, whose letters will be published by him immediately after the demise of the said Earl. He was sent to Newgate by the House of Commons in the year 1735, for his steadiness in prevaricating in the cause of Liberty; and sworn an Alderman in Dublin in the year 1770; fined for not serving the Office of Sheriff in the year 1768. His Journal (to which he hath lately added a fourth column) is circulated all over Europe, and taken in at the Coffee-houses in Constantinople, besides Bath, Bristol, Boston, Tunbridge Wells, Brighthelmstone, Virginia and Eyre Connaught. In his paragraphs he hath always studied the prosperity and honour of his native country, by strenuously decrying whiskey, projecting cellars, holes made by digging for gravel in the high roads, voiding of excrements in the public streets, throwing of squibs, crackers, sky-rockets, and bon-fires, by which many lives are lost, men, women and children maimed; sick persons disturbed out of their sleep; eyes burned out, and horses startled; recommending it to Archbishops, Dukes, Lords, Privy Councillors, Generals, Colonels, Field-officers, and Captains to fall down precipices, tumble into cellars, be overtwin by rubbish thrown in the streets in order to remove nuisances; dissuading all Bloods, Bucks, Smarts, Rapparees, and other such infernal night-walkers, from committing manslaughter upon pigs, hackney horses, watchmen's lanterns and other enormities; profane avising and swearing, and breaking the Sabbath and Commandments, exclaiming against the importation of potatoes, and advising to give more corn; inciting to virtue by characters in his Journal, and calling upon magistrates to do their duty. The Earl of Chesterfield compareth him to Atticus, a Roman baronet, and sundry other compliments. N. B.—His nephew Todd continueth to make the best brawn, and hath lately imported a large quantity of James's powders. Besides the great men above-mentioned, as Dean Swift and the Earl of Chesterfield, who at present correspond with the author hereof, he hath the most kind, affectionate, and complimentary letters from the celebrated Mr. Pope, of which the following underwritten epistle is a copy:—

To Mr. George Faulkner, Bookseller in Dublin.

Sir: I hear you have lately published an edition of Dr. Swift's works; send it to be by the first opportunity, and assure the Dean that I am ever his sincere and affectionate servant, Alexander Pope.

Also the following most friendly letter from the famous Mr. Wilkes:—

To Alderman Faulkner, Dublin.

Sir As I have no further occasion for your Journal, I desire you will discontinue sending it to your humble servant. John Wilkes.

In another portion of the same piece, Jephson, admirably imitating the paragraphs in *The Dublin Journal*, represents Faulkner as accounting as follows for a mistake in the erection of his house, which, although executed under his own personal direction, was actually built without stairs:

When my house was building, I happened to be out of the way one morning, penning an advertisement for an agreeable companion to pay half the expense of a post chaise, to see that stupendous curiosity of Nature, the Giant's Causeway, about which 'tis still a doubt among the learned, whether it be done in the common way by giants, or whether it be an effort of spontaneous nature, and my house was erected without any staircase; whereby the upper stories were rendered useless, unless by the communication of a ladder placed in the street. But upon considering my misfortune in wanting my member, and the carelessness of hackney coachmen, who drive furiously through the streets at all hours, in a state of drunkenness from the spiritous liquors, whereby the ladder might be shook or thrown down when I was ascending it, I thought it better to rebuild my house, and it has at present a staircase, by which there is a convenient and elegant communication between all parts of said tenement. It is somewhat remarkable that my house in Essex Street had no staircase, whereby Nature seemeth to point out that having but one leg, I ought not to attempt climbing and should always remain on the ground floor.

Another anecdote related by Jephson, in imitation again of Faulkner, exhibits the ingenuous style of the *Journal* even more wittily:

A gentleman came to his shop whom he had put among the deaths in his Journal the day before, and was enraged to find himself dead, as it occasioned some confusion by those who were in his debt coming to demand what was due to them, whereupon the author hereof noted in this manner. "Sir," said I, "'tis impossible for me to tell whether you be alive or dead, but I'm sure I gave you a very good character in my Journal." The gentleman was so pleased with the repartee, that he laid out thirteen shillings

and fourpence halfpenny before he left my former shop in Essex Street.³³

When at length Lord Townshend's administration came to a close, Jephson's sure position in life was somewhat shaken. The new Lord-Lieutenant, Lord Harcourt, did not seem to be so favorably disposed toward Jephson, and in the election of 1772, the Master of the Horse was not returned to Parliament. Indeed, there was some doubt of his being retained as Master of the Horse. The following indicates the state of his mind at this time:

... say as much as your partiality can dictate of me to my Lord Harcourt, or to any of your friends, should they happen to be in his Lordship's confidence. When his Lordship's having accepted the Government of Ireland was made public, I requested the honor of my Lord Townshend's recommendation to have me continued Master of the Horse, but delicacy to his successor prevented his Excellency from doing it, yet I have the satisfaction to think he wishes me well, as he declined doing me this favor in such a manner as left me no room to be discontented, and he is so good to intend settling a seat for me in Parliament before he leaves the Government. To some absent friends I have applied for their good offices, but I can form no conjecture of the event on better grounds than expectation, which is always fallible, that much, however, is certain, that your expressing any favorable sentiments of me, should it not contribute to my success, will be very flattering proof of my deserving it, and a salve for disappointment.³⁴

In the foregoing appeal to his former benefactor, David Garrick, we discern an anxiety which may well have visited him on the termination of Lord Townshend's regime. Further along in the letter we get a glimpse of domestic affairs in the Jephson household:

My wife always thinks of you and Mrs. Garrick with sincere friendship; she is by my side, and desires with mine her kindest compliments to you both. Her health has been sometimes indifferent, but her worst complaints, a cough and the rheumatism, are, thank God, much better. As to myself, I have had fevers without number, but her kind care and the skill of her excellent brother, Doctor Barry, have set me on my legs. If I can persevere in a course of temperance, I do not despair of possessing the greatest blessing in this life—*mens sana in corpore sano*. I wish you all happiness, and am sincerely,

My dear Sir, your most obliged and faithful servant,

Robert Jephson³⁵

³³ Gilbert, *op. cit.*, II, 45-48.

³⁴ *Private Correspondence of David Garrick*, I, 478.

³⁵ *Correspondence, Garrick*, I, 479.

In a letter dated September 3, 1772, Mr. Jephson informs his friend Garrick that he is to continue in his office of Master of the Horse "to the successor of my Lord Lieutenant." He also reacknowledges his debt of long standing and says in defense of his not having "been better enabled to cancel it" that his income has not increased in the five years he has been in Ireland and that he is obliged "to incur many new and heavy debts by my station at the Castle, attended as it is with unavoidable expenses much beyond the narrow means allowed to furnish them."³⁶

The first substantial beginnings of Jephson's dramatic career now become evident. In 1772, upon the advent of Lord Harcourt and the loss of his seat in Parliament, he seems to have turned his back, for a time at least, on politics, and returned to his first love, the stage.

We find him, for example, acting the part of Macbeth in the Phoenix Park Theatre in Dublin. A detailed account of the performance is contained in his letter to Garrick:

March 2nd, 1773.

You have heard much, no doubt, of our "Macbeth." The second night of the representation, Mrs. Gardiner surprised even me, who have long thought of her with the affectionate partiality of a brother. The language of Lady Macbeth is so peculiar, that I think it no easy matter to convey the meaning of the author; she seemed to me to give the full sense and spirit of every passage; deportment, countenance and articulation (notwithstanding a natural lisp) excellently. On the first night, there was such a hurricane of wind and rain that the noise seemed at times to confound us all.

As to myself, I played some parts very poorly, and others better than I expected. I had little possession of myself (on the second night which I remember best) till after the murder of Duncan. That scene, the whole banquet scene, and the fifth act were my best. I wanted solemnity of voice in some of the deep moral reflections; and my transitions might have been more artful.

The reward I met with in one of the libellous papers here was a sharp malignant letter, addressed to the thane of Cawdor, to persuade me and the public that I never could appear but to my disgrace in any but a fictitious character. I felt at first some little resentment, but it soon subsided, when I considered that I had formerly dipped my pen in the mud of party; and when I knew that the person generally supposed to be the author could have no motive for such an attack but the hope of assisting a bad cause in an election at present before a committee, in which I am bound to take an active part as a nominee for my friend, Mr.

³⁶ *Private Correspondence of David Garrick, I, 483.*

Hutchinson. I do not send you the libel, because it might probably fall into hands not as partial as yours to the Thane of Cawdor; but I trouble you with this particular, hoping that if the libel should appear in the English papers, or be talked of in your presence, you will be so good as to assign the cause I have mentioned; which I have no doubt to be the true one.

In the same letter a reference is made to a play, in all probability, *Braganza*, that he was writing.

Though my health is at present much better than I would expect considering my former abuse of constitution, a much stronger man than myself may not live to see the golden fruit which is not to ripen in less than a twelve-month.

It is interesting to note in connection with Jephson's acting the part of Macbeth, that although he is not sparing in the criticism of his own acting, he seems unable to receive gracefully the criticism of others. One would think that the author of *An Epistle to Gorges Edmond Howard, Esq.* would be more charitable toward his critics, and accept their thrusts with more equanimity.

Jephson appears, however, to have been a good judge of acting, as we shall see in his comments upon the actors in his own productions, in the second part of this study. An instance of this, however, may well be included in the biographical account for the light it throws upon Jephson's discernment in this respect and for its information concerning his association with John Philip Kemble:

In October, 1781, Daly opened the Smock-Alley Theatre, where John Philip Kemble, engaged at 5 pounds per week, first appeared in the following November as Hamlet, after which he performed Old Nowal in *Douglas*, Mr. Strickland in *The Suspicious Husband*, and Sir G. Touchwood in *The Belle's Stratagem*; but his negligent delivery and heaviness of deportment impeded his progress, until these defects were removed by the instruction of his friend, Captain Jephson, in whose *Count of Narbonne* his reputation was first established. In this tragedy, which had a most successful run of thirty nights, Kemble was supported by the manager, Daly, as Theodore; while the part of Adelaide was performed by the youthful Dorothea Francis, afterwards so celebrated as Mrs. Jordon.³⁷

In 1774, Jephson was returned to Parliament through the efforts of Lord Harcourt, who seemed to have now conceived Jephson's talents to be of possible service. He was elected

³⁷ Gilbert, *op. cit.*, I, 107.

to fill Lord Massey's vacant seat of old Leighlin and Fern's.³⁸ It was during this occupancy that Jephson delivered himself of his notable speech in behalf of the Roman Catholics, regarding which speech he wrote to Garrick as follows:

Dublin Castle, April 7th, 1774.

Dear Sir:

I enclose you a speech which, very contrary to my inclinations, has made its way to the press, and I think it is probable the credit I got by it on the delivery may be forfeited by the serious perusal; however, if it has any merit it will not escape you, and you will be a friend to the endeavor, as I know you are an enemy to every species of oppression. If Mrs. Garrick continues as good a Catholic as usual, I flatter myself she will be pleased with an attempt to rescue thousands of the same persuasion from the absurd severity of laws which equally impoverish them and their oppressors. I beg my best compliments and am, dear Sir,

Ever your affectionate and obliged Servant,

Robert Jephson³⁹

While the tone of this letter, with its note of self-esteem, probably needs a corrective, Samuel Foote's account of Jephson in Parliament, an altogether unflattering picture, is manifestly too biased to deserve acceptance.⁴⁰ To some degree Jephson was a coxcomb, but his education, his training on

³⁸ *Biographia Dramatica*, I,² 399.

³⁹ *Private Correspondence of David Garrick*, II, 276.

⁴⁰ This picture, to be found in Percy Fitzgerald's *Samuel Foote, A Biography* (London, 1890), p. 310, I submit to the reader for final judgment:

Little Jephson, who owes his establishment on this side of the water to me, is (by being smuggled into Parliament) become in his own idea a man of importance. He has been delivered, in a senate frequent and full, of a false conception or two, and is unanimously declared by his colleagues incapable of either facundity or fecundity.

The first time I met with my gentleman was about a month after my landing, at the Parliament House. He had fixed himself on the lowest bench next the floor, his arms folded and his legs across, the right eye covered by his hat, and the left occasionally thrown on me with an unmarking, transitory glance. However, the very polite attention paid to me by the Speaker, the Duke of Leinster, Mr. Conolly, and, indeed, all the men of consequence there, roused the Captain's recollection. He approached me with a cold compliment, and dropped a scarce audible apology for not having called at my door, but public a-a-affairs had - a so entirely engrossed him, that he had really no leisure to - a - a - a I own I was ready to laugh in his face; but, recollecting a gravity equal to his own, I applauded his zeal for the commonwealth, begged that no consideration of me should for the future divert his thoughts from the cause of his country: was afraid I had already taken up too much of his time: made him a most profound bow. And the Copper Captain in politics with great gravity retired to his seat. I find he has been left by Lord Townshend as a kind of encumbrance upon his successors; but

the London stage, and his potential talent as an author surely prevented his being the utter dolt that Foote, with considerable malice, makes him out to be.

The remaining years of Jephson's life were devoted to literary pursuits, which will be discussed in detail later.

He died of paralysis at the Black Rock in 1803 at the age of sixty-seven. The following obituary, which appeared in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, summarizes briefly his career:

At his home, Black Rock, near Dublin, Robert Jephson, Esq., many years Master of the Horse to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland and a successful dramatic writer. He was formerly an officer in the Irish Army, and formerly M.P. in that kingdom and celebrated for his convivial powers and his felicity in ludicrous composition. He is said to have contributed during the administration of Marquis Townshend to a periodical publication called *The Bachelor*. His dramatic piece *Braganza* was acted for a season, with success, at Drury Lane and printed in 1775; but the plot was thought to resemble *Venice Preserved* too nearly in some parts. The *Law of Lombardy* with a similar relation to *Much Ado About Nothing* was acted nine nights at Drury Lane—printed 1779. His other compositions were *The Count of Narbonne*, *The Campaign*, an opera, *Julia*, in language and sentiments often sublime, *Two Strings to Your Bow* in 1794, *The Confessions of Jean Baptiste Couteau*, a severe satire of his own on the depravity of French manners but very reprehensible in many accounts.⁴¹

I have some reason to believe that they would be glad to be rid of the mortgage. He has since the interview been very frequent and free with my knocker, but the servants have received proper instructions

⁴¹ *The Gentleman's Magazine* (1803), p 600.

II

THE WORKS OF ROBERT JEPHSON

In order to understand the significance of the poetic tragedies of Robert Jephson, it is necessary to re-examine the influences and literary fashions prevalent in the age in which he wrote. Perhaps first in importance, judging from the amount of discussion aroused, is the influence of French canons of tragedy upon the taste of the time. These canons were championed with great zeal by Voltaire who believed that the laws of Greek tragedy were ideal and that tragedy worthy of the name should observe the unities, emphasize the conduct of the plot, refrain from the introduction of comic figures, and be composed in the sonorous and declamatory language of the classical authors. These ideas were not merely prevalent in the eighteenth century but predominating, and their complete triumph was obstructed only by the increasing popularity of Shakespeare's plays.¹ Shakespeare's indifference to classic canons was regretted (even ridiculed by Voltaire), but it also aroused a doubt as to their validity. The idea that Shakespeare made his own rules was becoming more and more articulate as the age advanced, and as a consequence, the tendency to tinker with his plays, and remould them nearer to the classicist's desire, lessened. Moreover, during this period the influence of the Elizabethans was strong. The public of Jephson's day was not immune to the "blood and thunder" element that Webster, Kyd, Marlowe and others of the Elizabethan era were wont to give their audiences.

A further literary fashion, and one that had a noticeable effect on the tragedies that Jephson wrote, was the so-called "Gothic," which derived from Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* and had the characteristic atmosphere of the "terrific school of fiction."

Into this fabric of forces and literary fashions, Robert

¹ T. R. Lounsbury, *Shakespeare and Molière* (New York, 1902), p. 258.

Jephson, in 1772, at the mature age of thirty-six, began weaving a strand—tragedies, a little reminiscent of Shakespeare in plan and occasionally in language. But he brought to his task considerable experience in the London and Dublin theatres. He worked for some fifteen years, and during that time produced five tragedies—four of them highly successful on the London stage—an opera, and a farce. Jephson, now nearly if not entirely forgotten, was in his own time a dramatist of importance. He is one of those strange figures in literature who catch the popular fancy, through reasons not always discernible, hold it for a time, and then sink into obscurity.

A century and half after their production, it is not possible to explain entirely the success of Jephson's tragedies. Tragedy, if it roots itself in a contemporary interest, invariably appeals. Some of Jephson's dramas, notably that phosphorescent play patterned on *The Castle of Otranto*, do so root themselves. In addition, Jephson possessed, according to the almost unanimous verdict of the time, a distinct gift for stately, poetic language and, by the more enthusiastic commentators, was even compared to Dryden and Shakespeare.

Let us now proceed to a discussion of his individual plays and observe, where we can, the dramatist at work.

It was on February 17, 1775, that Jephson's first tragedy, *Braganza*, was brought out at the Drury Lane Theatre. It had been written sometime during 1774. Writing to Garrick under date of September 5, 1774, he says:

I have employed the leisure of some weeks in an attempt which I hope will meet with your approbation and encouragement, and have now brought it so near a conclusion, that I venture to divulge it to you. Fortune did not seem inclined to enable me to repay you the sum you so kindly assisted me with long ago, so I have been obliged to resort to the poor exchequer of my own brain, and try what that could do for me. In short, I have finished four acts and part of the fifth of a tragedy, and as the business of what remains is already digested, even to the order of the scenes, I have no doubt but that the whole will soon (if ever) be fit for your perusal.

The story of the piece is taken from the Abbé Vertot's short account of the Revolutions of Portugal. I have introduced several incidents merely of invention, which I think with probability arise from the subject, and interweave with it so as to make a very

unobvious though a very natural interest. The situations excite great expectation, which is preserved to the conclusion. The unities are sufficiently preserved, and the decorations will not be expensive. Till you have it in your hands, I cannot expect your being able to form any judgment . . . ²

By November 25, it was in the hands of Garrick and a few days later, on the 28th of that month, we find Jephson replying to Garrick's criticism of the play.³ The manager of the Drury Lane Theatre appears to have disliked the narrative element in the drama and Jephson promises to make alterations, although he says he will "smart a good deal under the amputation of the third act."

Things move along. On December 20, 1774, Tighe, a close friend of Jephson's, intercedes for the immediate production of *Braganza* and says that it ought not be postponed longer, "as it can be played immediately at Covent Garden."

Five days later, on the twenty-third, Jephson wrote to Garrick thanking him for his intention of bringing out the play on that season and promises two acts to be in readiness by the first week in January, 1775.⁴

A month and a half later, February 17, 1775, *Braganza* was produced at the Drury Lane Theatre. First-nighters of that date witnessed a play which ran as follows: Portugal is suffering under the iron rule of one Velasquez, a Spanish minister, who has designs on the throne of Portugal, which is chafing under the rule of its Spanish conqueror, Phillip II. The people of Portugal have no love for Velasquez. Their idol is the Duke of Braganza, a rather mild person, unwilling to take things in charge and make himself Portugal's king. His wife, the Duchess of Braganza, however, is resolute and urges him to make himself King.

In the meanwhile, Velasquez, who fears Braganza's popularity will terminate his own ambitions, inspires a monk, Ramirez, to poison the Duke. The monk assents and sets off for the palace of Braganza. But before the plot of Ramirez can be carried out, a conspiracy against Velasquez, instituted by several Portuguese nobles, breaks out and as Velasquez

² *Private Correspondence of David Garrick*, I, 660.

³ *Private Correspondence of David Garrick*, II, 22.

⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 23.

passes through the streets in front of Braganza's palace, the conspirators attack. But crafty old Velasquez makes his escape in disguise, gains access to the apartment of the Duchess of Braganza, and when the Duke, coming to his wife's aid, approaches, he threatens to kill her. The Duke, true to form, is inclined to make concessions, but the Duchess, ever resolute, defies Velasquez. At this point Ramirez is brought in, dying. His scheme to poison the Duke had been discovered. Velasquez is unnerved, hesitates, is seized by the adherents to the Braganza cause and cast in prison. But before he can be saved by the guards a mob breaks in, and in the street tears him to pieces. There remains but the coronation of Braganza as King of Portugal.

The source of the play, as Jephson remarked in his letter to Garrick, is the Abbé Vertot's *Revolutions of Portugal*.⁵ In several details Jephson has changed the story, but in its main essentials he follows the Abbé's account. No mention is made in the original of an attempt to poison the Duke. Ramirez is an invention. The name of the Spanish vice-regent in Portugal has been changed from Vasconcelles to Velasquez.

The most considerable change from the original enters into Jephson's dramatic version of the history at that point relating to Vasconcelles' (or Velasquez's) death. In the Abbé's account the nobles break into the room where the Spaniard is supposed to be, only to find it empty. They ask an old maid-servant, who is in the room, where her master is and she points to a press in the wall. They force the door and under a heap of old papers find Vasconcelles, who is trembling in anticipation of a violent death. One of the Portuguese thereupon shoots him down in cold blood, through the head, and they toss his body out of the window into the street below, where it is torn to pieces by an angry mob.

Jephson's change is somewhat for the better. Bringing the Duchess into the story sets before us once again the person who is the really strong character of the play and lets her experience some of the smoke of battle which ends so fortunately for the Duke and for her.

⁵ A translation of this work was published in London in 1813.

Jephson has done much with the characters and they appear in the play considerably vivified. In Vertot's story, for example, the Duke of Braganza is not much more than a figure-head for the conspirators. Never does he grasp the leadership of the conspiracy in hand and carry on to victory. He sits back and allows the tide of hatred against the Spaniards to carry him to his royal seat. As Vertot remarks, he seems much more "the private gentleman" than the conquering hero. Jephson has endowed Braganza with several ennobling qualities. In the first place he is brave, and, if not decisive, it is only his pious nature that prevents him from too hurriedly shedding blood. Velasquez is also changed. From the crafty but cowardly Vasconcelles he is become the villainous, desperate Velasquez—almost a complete transformation. The Duchess is unchanged from Vertot's account, although there is something Lady Macbethian in her diction. For example:

I have a woman's form, a woman's fears;
 I shrink from pain and start at dissolution;
 Yet summon'd as we are, your honor pledg'd
 Your own just rights engaged, your country's fate,
 Let threatening death assume his direct form,
 Let dangers multiply, still would I on,
 Still urge, exhort, confirm thy constancy,
 And though we perished in the bold attempt,
 With my last breath I'd bless the glorious cause,
 And think it happiness to die so nobly.

(II, 11)

Braganza brought Jephson quickly into the limelight as an author of tragedy. *The London Chronicle* for February remarks:

The whole representation was received with uncommon marks of applause.⁶

Horace Walpole, in a letter to Jephson on February 24, says:

After the very great and general applause given to *Braganza*, my admiration of it, Sir, can be of little value, though very precious to me, as it has procured me no very obliging and, forgive my saying, far too flattering, a mark of attention from you. The pleasure I once had of being acquainted with you naturally attracted my expectation from your play. It is but true to say that it has far exceeded it. I did not expect that a first produc-

⁶ *The London Chronicle* (1775), p. 167.

tion in a way in which I did not know you, would prove the work of a master-poet. Even on hearing the first three acts, I was struck not only with the language, metaphors and similes, which are as new as noble and beautiful, but with the modulation of the numbers. Your ear, Sir, is as perfect as your images, and no poet we have excels you in harmony.⁷

The Critical Review gives *Braganza* unusual praise and says that from the first to the fifth act, there is an uninterrupted charm of dramatic action. Furthermore, prophesies the critic, a distinguished rank awaits the author, if he selects the right subject, for the great excellence of the piece, beauty of diction, "rivals any composition of the tragic muse."⁸

The play was not without its adverse criticism. "As a dramatic writer," decides *The Sentimental Magazine*, "we cannot think so highly of Mr. Jephson, as the general enthusiasm might warrant; he has paid too little attention to the conduct of his fable, or the first four acts would have been otherwise employed, than in unnecessary entrances and exits of the different conspirators . . ." The scenes as a consequence become languid, and lavish diction cannot cover the defect of too much wandering on and off the stage by conspirators supposed to be busy at their conspiring. "We likewise think," *The Sentimental Magazine* continues, "that Velasquez's revealing his intention of visiting Louise in disguise, destroys the effect of a fine scene."⁹

All of this is valid criticism. Jephson's fault, which he corrected to some extent later, was a paucity of action, which makes the first two acts in particular, rather wooden. The conspirators are brought in, for example in II, i, for no other purpose than to describe the prospects of securing the Duke's leadership in the conspiracy.

The Critical Review thinks the play labors under "a deficiency of incidents," and that there is no gradation of events by which the catastrophe ought to be produced.¹⁰ There is much truth in this assertion, as an examination of the plot will reveal. No action of any magnitude develops until the plot of Velasquez is engendered; that is, the monk's inspira-

⁷ Toynbee, *Letters of Horace Walpole*, I, 245.

⁸ *The Critical Review*, XXXIX, 209.

⁹ *The Sentimental Magazine* (1775), p. 56.

¹⁰ *The Critical Review*, XXXIX, 209.

tion to poison Braganza. The two acts that go before that event are taken up in the main with narrative speeches to apprise us of the situation, and although some of the play's finest speeches are contained herein—for example, the exhortation of the Duchess—it is not to be wondered at that the critics of the time thought the play lacked "incident."

The play was noticed by Dr. Johnson. He pointed out an awkwardness in construction with his usual heavy emphasis:

Dr. Johnson calls the act in *Braganza* with the monk, paralytic on one side; i.e., the monk is introduced without any notification of his character, so that any monk, or any other person might as well be introduced in the same place and for the same purpose.¹¹

Jephson's handling of entrances and exits, always unskillful, is more clumsy in *Braganza* than in his later plays, the entrance of the monk, quite unmotivated as Dr. Johnson points out, being a flagrant example. A second case, the entrance of the conspirators, faultily managed, we mentioned earlier.

Contemporary critics almost universally praise Jephson's diction. This passage from a speech of Velasquez is a fair example of Jephson's powers. It was made to Ramirez to induce him to poison the Duke:

Say, can you be content in these poor weeds,
To know no earthly hopes beyond a cloister?
But stretch'd on musty mats in noisome caves,
To rouse at midnight bells, and mutter prayers
For souls beyond their reach, to senseless saints?
To wage perpetual war with nature's bounty?
To blacken sick mens' chambers and be number'd
With the loath'd leavings of mortality,
The watch-light, hour-glass, and the nauseous phial?
Are these the ends of life? Was this fine frame
Nerves exquisitely textur'd, soft desires,
Aspiring thoughts, this comprehensive soul,
With all her train of god-like faculties,
Given to be sunk in this vile drudgery?

(III, i)

Further on, in the tense scenes where Velasquez holds the Duchess as a hostage against his death, the melodramatic diction of a half-century later is anticipated:

¹¹ *Johnsonian Miscellanies* (Oxford, 1897), p. 46.

Approach not, stir not;
Or, by the blackest furies hell e'er loos'd,
This dagger drinks her blood.

But the diction of the play rarely descends to such hectic passages as the foregoing. Its chief characteristic is abundance of metaphor and simile, sometimes at the expense of lucidity. A fair example of this is contained in the response of Ramirez to Velasquez's veiled suggestion that he poison the Duke:

Still am I lost in dark uncertainty,
And must forever wander, till thy breath
Deign to dispel the impenetrable mist,
Fooling my sight that strives in vain to pierce it.
(I, 11)

All this, to express to Velasquez that he did not understand his purpose, to a modern ear sounds rather absurd. But when we examine Cumberland's tragedy, *The Carmelite*, and even Walpole's *The Mysterious Mother*, the same sort of circumlocution can be found. The critics of the time rarely attack the over-decorative in Jephson's language, and it may be assumed that the public, like the Elizabethans, enjoyed such verbal display.

In the same year that *Braganza* was on the stage at Drury Lane, Captain Jephson had completed another play. "I have great hopes that the tragedy *Vitellia* may make its appearance," he writes to Garrick in the summer of 1775, "not unprofitably to the manager of the same theatre, and myself, next winter."¹²

But when the play was submitted to that experienced actor and manager, he advised against its production in no uncertain terms. His letter follows:

Dec. 18th, 1775.

My dear Sir:

I took *Vitellia* with me to Hampton, and I not only read it myself to myself, but to some ladies and a gentleman of great taste in theatrical matters. They were ignorant of the author, but agreed that it was not at all calculated for success upon the stage—that it was romantic and what was worse, unaffecting. Indeed you will, in my opinion, rue the hour that it was brought upon the stage. Your reputation is, at present, high on our dramatic list, and why you would venture to throw away your well-earned fame, upon an uncertainty, at the best, I cannot conceive. In

¹² *The Private Correspondence of David Garrick*, I, 530.

short, I am so certain of my judgment in the present business, that I cannot consent to your undoing your well-doing in the same theatre.

I beseech you to consult your sincere and knowing friends—call a grand jury of them and let our friend Tighe be the foreman; and after they have sworn upon our dramatic gospel Shakespeare, let them bring *Vitellia* in a *true bill* if they dare. You have made me unhappy but nevertheless, my best and warmest wishes attend you and yours.

I am, Sir, most affectionately yours.

D. G.

P. S. It is impossible that anything worthy of you should be resolved or done in this hurry-scurry, patch-work way. You adventure too much.¹³

Vitellia was not produced the following season, but in 1796 under the title of *The Conspiracy* it gained a place at Drury Lane. It will be discussed later.

It is difficult to ascertain the exact year when Jephson began work on *The Law of Lombardy*, his second tragedy, which occupied the Drury Lane Theatre ten nights during February, 1779, and, successfully, at various times thereafter. Mention of the play is made as early as 1773 in the Garrick letters¹⁴ and it may be that *The Law of Lombardy* took shape in its author's mind before *Braganza*.

Jephson's second tragedy hinges on a law which pronounced the sentence of death on any woman (no matter of what rank) who was proven to be unchaste. On this thematic foundation Jephson built the following plot: Paladore, a young Englishman, is in love with the Princess of Lombardy, and she with him. The King, however, wishes her to marry one Bireno, a near relation, who, on his own account, is ambitious to marry her. Bireno, a villainous sort, has previously seduced Alinda, an attendant of the Princess. When Bireno finds that Paladore and the Princess are mutually in love, he tells Paladore that he has been intimate with the Princess, and undertakes to prove it. At night he stations Paladore outside the window of the Princess and proceeds to enter her apartment, where he is received with caresses by Alinda, dressed as the Princess. Paladore, who has given his oath to leave the country if Bireno can prove his assertion, is deceived, and forthwith exiles himself. This is to the taste

¹³ *The Private Correspondence of David Garrick*, II, 114.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 517.

of Bireno who now openly accuses the Princess of unchaste relations with Paladore. She, as a result, and in conformity with the law of Lombardy, is sent to prison to await execution. But she is allowed a champion to fight her accuser, according to another law, presumably, and the spire of dramatic action is reached. Meanwhile, Bireno, somewhat worried lest the ruse be discovered, dispatches two foresters to kill Alinda. The cut-throats stab Alinda and leave her to die. Paladore, happening on the scene before Alinda expires, hears her confession. In the last scene, at the scaffold, Paladore, as the Princess' champion, kills Bireno. As a reward the King of Lombardy gives him the Princess.

The source of the play is to be found in the fourth, fifth, and sixth books of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*. Jephson has altered the plot for his own purposes in several details. In Ariosto's story, the maid Dalinda (the Alinda of *The Law of Lombardy*) is saved from her would-be assassins by Rinaldo (Paladore) before they can actually harm her, and she is given leave, despite the hard law of Lombardy, to find asylum in Denmark. Jephson, for stage purposes, found it more expeditious to have the foresters stab Alinda. For the rest, the plot of *The Law of Lombardy* and the story of Geneusa closely tally.

The play was first acted on February 8, 1779, at the Drury Lane Theatre, where it had a successful run of ten days. It was acted later in the same year at Bath and at Covent Garden.¹⁵ The part of the Princess was taken by the popular Miss Younge, and Henderson played the part of Bireno.

The critics received the play with mingled sentiments. The reception accorded *The Law of Lombardy* was rather cooler than that given *Braganza*. *The London Chronicle*,¹⁶ whose account of the tragedy is identical with that of *The Universal Magazine*,¹⁷ remarks that "the play was received by a numerous and polite audience with applause." *The Town and Country Magazine* is severe in its condemnation, asserting that the tragedy has "no scenic situations" and that "the

¹⁵ John Genest, *Some Account of the English Stage*, VI, 161.

¹⁶ *London Chronicle* (1779), p. 141.

¹⁷ *The Universal Magazine*. LXIV, 94.

catastrophe is anticipated."¹⁸ The first criticism is a trifle obscure. From a reading of the play, which of course has its limitations, it appears to be full of dramatic situations. Alinda in the forest appealing for her life; Paladore's timely return; his appearance as her champion. The catastrophe is unquestionably anticipated. As soon as we hear Alinda's confession the news is out—the ultimate ending need not have been postponed.

The same writer is adversely critical of Jephson's language, a rather interesting fact considering the almost universal respect for *Braganza's* diction. "The language is forced and inflated and too often smells of the lamp," says this critic. And we are forced to agree.

The Law of Lombardy is full of long, studied, declamatory speeches which remind one of the early Elizabethan Senecan drama. In Scene III, Act V, for example, a scene containing sixty lines, the Princess usurps forty-eight to deliver an oration against "the hard law of Lombardy." Nevertheless there are several rather good lines in the tragedy:

What has old age to lose? Is the poor remnant
Of life, worn threadbare, precious for itself?

(V, 11)

and again:

Beneath a rugged thorn, I found this flower,
Blushing, unmarked, its odorous life away . . . ¹⁹

On November 17, 1781, occurred the première of a third tragedy *The Count of Narbonne*. Although the foregoing dramas of Jephson were influenced by the "Gothic" genre, this element in *The Count of Narbonne* is fundamental. It was based on Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* and catches much of the mystery and cathedral gloom that hangs about that tale. But it is quite true, as a recent article points out,²⁰ that the horrors of the Gothic novel were much toned down.

¹⁸ *Town and Country Magazine* (1779), p. 484.

¹⁹ The resemblance of these lines to Gray's:

Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air . . .

is obvious.

²⁰ Willard Thorp, "The Stage Adventures of Some Gothic Novels," *PMLA*, LVIII (1928), p. 476.

The late eighteenth-century theatre was not ready for the "romantic," as Garrick with reference to *Vitellia* plainly stated.

It is interesting to note that the names from *Otranto* are not used by Jephson but that he selects instead those from Walpole's unacted tragedy, *The Mysterious Mother*. *The Count of Narbonne* utilizes other features of that pioneer of the later eighteenth-century tragedies. Walpole's drama is a story of incestuous love, where a heinous guilt makes an innocent victim of a son. In the Jephson play the son also suffers from the crime of his father. It is quite possible that *The Count of Narbonne* was tutored by the method of *The Mysterious Mother*—with the offensive element removed for its production on the stage.

The following critical account of the play is quoted from *The London Chronicle* for the day after the Gothic tragedy was produced. It will be seen that the reviewer takes for granted familiarity with *The Castle of Otranto*.

The play is opened by Manfred, now Raymond, Count of Narbonne, in the most interesting period of the story. He has just received the challenge, in which his rights to Narbonne are questioned; and whilst he laments, to his confidant, the prophetic curse that had been denounced against his family, which appeared to be confirmed by a divorce from Hortensia, and a marriage with Isabella, the contracted bride of his deceased son. This is opposed by the good Priest, whose character is given with increased display, and is finely written throughout. Theodore is introduced with more favorable circumstances, and his love for Adelaide originates in an encounter, wherein he saves her from ruffians, who had attempted to carry her off. The successive discoveries of his birth, of his rights to the province, unjustly usurped by the father of Raymond; and of his resemblance to his murdered grandfather, all produced a striking theatrical effect; and the last was greatly heightened, as by an easy and natural event he appears in the real armour of Alphonso. These with the agitations of the Count, whose afflictions deserve consideration, as he suffers for the crime of his father rather than his own—the patient yet dignified fortitude of the injured Hortensia—and the tender attachment of the unfortunate Adelaide form the principal circumstances of the dramatic action. Isabella, though still an object in the drama, does not appear from her messages from the sanctuary delivered by Austin; and her father, with his train of knights, is totally discarded. Amidst so many objects in the original tale, all would not be adopted, as they were much too numerous for a tragedy; but more might have been given in event, the fewer in narrative. The author was probably conscious that his strength lay in narratives, and every figure, every ornamental

flower of descriptive poetry is exhausted to advise them. The catastrophe is greatly heightened, and the circumstances managed with better attention to the character of the Count. He thinks he sees the hand of Isabella joined by Austin to Theodore; this fatal night, which extinguishes at once all hopes of his love and ambition, inflames him to madness, and he draws his sword, though in a place of sanctuary, and rushes on Theodore, who is defended by the armour of Alphonso. Disappointed in his principal object, he darts the vengeful blow, as he thinks, at Isabella, but it penetrates to the bosom of his daughter. At this fatal moment, Hortensia appears, and Raymond, unable to bear her anguish and his own stabs himself and expires, imploring pardon at her feet. Hortensia, overborne by the horrid sight of her murdered daughter and husband at her feet, sinks in the agonies of despair, and a deathlike stupor, which precedes dissolution. The race of the usurper being thus extinct puts a period to the portentous calamities with which the state has been inflicted, and Theodore peaceably succeeds to the possession of his ancestors. The dresses and scenery were happily adapted throughout, and the play went off with warm and general applause.

The Prologue was argumentative and deprecatory, and contained, as usual, a warm expostulation with critics.

The Epilogue, which we understand is written by Mr. Good-enough, was very happily adapted to the events of the preceding play, and contains many good and nervous lines, which were admirably delivered by Miss Younge.²¹

Perhaps a more discerning criticism is contained in *A New Review* early in 1782:

Theodore: The Murderer was guilty, not his race.

Thus spoke the critic of the piece: The fault is in the choice of subject, and it was impossible for all Mr. Jephson's art to mend it. Narbonne is perhaps one of the finest drawings of an impetuous bad man that exists; nothing can be more in character than his:

Fabian: Heaven defend you.

Count: I hope it will, and this right arm to boot.

Dextra mihi Deus, et telum, hoc quod missile libro.

or his:

First Officer: We will, my Lord, about it instantly.

Count: Temper your zeal, and know your orders first.

except it be that fine paraphrase of "heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away," of Austin's:

Yes,

Yes, he must suffer; my rapt soul foresees it.

Empires shall sink, the ponderous globe of earth

Crumble to dust, the sun and stars be quench'd;

But, O Eternal Father, of thy will,

To that last letter all shall be accomplished.

²¹ *The London Chronicle* (1781), p. 484.

The interest likewise is well kept up, and there are various beauties in the inferior characters, besides the uncommon merit of a diction (but for eight improper similes) the most perfect, perhaps, that exists, as it is real conversation, and has all the ornaments of poetry that real conversation can allow. All this and more may be said in its favor, where, then are its faults?

The great one of them all, that it can never cause violent emotions in a judicious spectator, who will always see Narbonne as an unfortunate madman, not as a man of blood; will laugh, instead of shuddering, at his alarm on seeing Theodore in Alfonso's armour; and will condemn the catastrophe as bloody without being probable, and atrocious without being pathetic. As to the Almighty's punishing the crime of the ancestor on the descendant, it is theological, but not dramatick. It requires the freezing and harrowing peer of a Shakespeare to bring it into life; in inferior hands it only necessitates other improbabilities, such as Clarinsal's changing his character to oppose a marriage, which, as a priest, and a lover of peace, he should be happy at; Narbonne's (to give him a little guilt of his own earning) running after a barbarous divorce by barbarous means, etc. etc. By the way, Mr. Jephson, whom I venture to dissent from in the spirit of candour, and with the fullest admiration of what there is good, seems to me always to run away from scenes of feeling, as if he were unequal to them. In *Braganza* there is not as much pathos as there should be; and in *The Law of Lombardy* a father and his daughter, who are to part forever, hold a metaphysical debate upon the immortality of the soul. This, again, may be in character, but is not dramatick. But this and all other faults Mr. Jephson will undoubtedly get over if he goes on writing.

In *The Count of Narbonne* Jephson must have taken unusual pains with his language. The critics, as we have seen, have marked some of the fine passages. Here are two further examples. They are rather above Jephson's average:

I saw my lilies drooping; and, accustom'd
To see them dying, bore to see them dead.

(I, i)

and:

Your cheek, unlike
Its wonted bloom, as is the red-veined rose
To the dim sweetness of the violet . . .

(II, i)

Horace Walpole appears to have had a high regard for *The Count of Narbonne* as, naturally, he would have. The following letter gives an interesting sidelight on his connection with the play:

Berkeley Square, Sunday Morning
November 18th, 1781.

I have been here again for three days, tending and nursing, and waiting on Mr. Jephson's play. I have brought it into the world, was well delivered of it; it can stand on its own legs, and I am

going back to my own quiet hill, never likely to have anything more to do with theatres. Indeed, it has seemed strange to me, who for these three or four years have not been so many times in a playhouse, nor knew six of the actors by sight, to be at two rehearsals behind the scenes, in the Green room, and acquainted with half the company. *The Count of Narbonne* was played last night with great applause and without a single murmur of disapprobation. Miss Younge has charmed me. She played with intelligence that was quite surprising. The applause to one of her speeches lasted a minute, and recommenced twice before the play could go on. I am sure you will be pleased with the conduct, and the easy beautiful language of the play, and struck with her acting.

To the Hon. H. S. Conway.²²

The following are some passages that illustrate this "easy, beautiful language":

Since that black hour, the Thunder scarce has slept;
Nature seem'd fearful of her wonted course;
As if the angry spirit of Alphonso,
Driving the loosen'd orbs in storm and fire,
Wreck'd all this elemental, vast machine,
To break the tenour of men's peaceful souls.

(I, vii)

There is a vague echo of the murder scene in *Macbeth* in the following:

(The Count returns with a bloody dagger)

The deed is done.
Hark, the deep thunder rolls

And an echo of Hamlet:

This load of being is intolerable.

And another:

Take me from misery too sharp to bear,
And join me to my child.

And yet another:

Fall, fall, thick darkness, hide me from that face

And finally Adelaide's speech:

Alas! 'tis mockery to pray as I do
Thoughts fit for heaven should rise on seraph's wings,
Unclog'd with aught of earth; but mine hang here,
Beginning, ending all in Theodore.

On April 14, 1787, at Drury Lane, *Julia*, the last tragedy by Jephson was produced. It is true that *The Conspiracy*

²² *Memoirs of John Philip Kemble* (London, 1825), I, 39.

had its première in 1796, but as we have pointed out, this was merely *Vitellia* under a new name.

The plot of *Julia* is laid in the Isle of Guernsey and revolves around the love of Mentevole for Julia. She, however, was in love with a certain Claudio, who was foully murdered by an unknown hand, and is inconsolable. Marcellus, a brave young soldier, now comes on the scene and falls immediately in love with Julia. Mentevole, in a jealous rage, challenges Marcellus, but in the duel that ensues, is disarmed. In the duel, Mentevole lets fall a picture of Julia, which his sister, Olympibia, bears to Julia. Julia understands it all now. The picture is the one Claudio wore about his neck when he was killed. Mentevole is now suspected and is brought before the Duke. He confesses, but, immediately thereafter, stabs Julia, then tries to do away with himself, but is prevented.

The reception of this piece by the critics was not very warm. The compliments were somewhat perfunctory, and the adverse comments suggest a weariness of Jephson on the part of the reviews. The audiences, however, still seem to applaud. *The London Chronicle* reacts thus to the play:

The principal incidents of the story are founded on an event which actually occurred in the island of Guernsey or Jersey, within the present century, and are extremely interesting and affecting.

Such are the leading features of the tragedy of *Julia* which though it lays claim to much interest and force, forms by no means a perfect composition. The language is in general nervous and the imagery well adapted but the former is frequently inflated and the novelty of the latter sometimes consists merely in the terms in which it is conveyed.

For the success of this piece which was well received throughout, the author stands much indebted to the execution of the performers. Mrs. Siddons was happy, even beyond her usual success, in several scenes, but particularly in that where she is accused of being an accomplice in the murder of Claudio. Kemble's friendship for the author, demanding and receiving his best exertions, he supported the difficult part of Mentevole with uncommon effect; and the other performers concerned in doing ample justice to their respective characters.

The play, on being given out a second time for Monday evening, was received with continued applause.²³

A further example of the reception of *Julia* is contained in *The Memoirs of John Philip Kemble*.

²³ *London Chronicle* (1787), p. 364.

On the 12th of April, Jephson's much expected tragedy of *Julia* was received by a very brilliant audience with suitable applause. It is now completely forgotten. The language of the poet created a great deal of false criticism. It was considered by some to be too figurative.²⁴

The Town and Country Magazine says of *Julia* that "the characters express passions but do not seem to feel them," and that "every idea is in metaphor and this idea the author chases through all its windings, losing sight of that enchanting simplicity that touches and engages the heart."

It will be seen from the foregoing that the public became much more critical of Jephson as time went on. The critics in 1787 are beginning to analyze the diction—the feature which they hailed with enthusiasm after *Braganza*.

Another point of interest in *Julia* is the careful observance of the dramatic unities and a marked deference to the canons of French tragedy. The Gothic business was harnessed somewhat. There may have been some repudiation of the tragedies on the part of the public which is not altogether apparent in the critical notices but which was strong enough to turn Jephson to the predominant interest of the stage of his day—comedy.

At any rate, in 1791, Jephson tried his hand at farce, in a piece called *The Hotel or Two Strings to Your Bow*. It was acted as an after-piece at Covent Garden in January of the 1791 season. It is based on Vaughn's play, *The Hotel*, which Vaughn borrowed in his turn from a French or Spanish source.

The success of the farce was not sufficient, apparently, to warrant more than two productions during Jephson's lifetime, although as late as 1832 it was revived. It is to be found in a volume of reprints for that year.

The following criticism gives some idea of the moderate success of the farce:

The novelty of last night was a Farce under the title of *Two Strings to Your Bow*, announced as never before having been performed in this Kingdom. The original is an old Spanish play, of which there is an English translation of no very recent date under another name. In its present form, it is an importation from Ireland.

²⁴ *Memoirs of John Philip Kemble*, I, 378.

It contains some laughable incidents, and some genuine strokes of humour; but the colouring is not of the present day.

As its pedigree was not generally understood, and some of the best jokes and most comic situations have been transplanted into new comedies, part of the audience mistook the original for the copy, and it was received with a mixture of censure and applause.²⁵

On November 15, 1796, *The Conspiracy*, the renamed *Vitellia*, was brought out. As there is no copy of this play available, no translation of its source, *The Clemency of Titus*, by Metastasio, a summary of the plot as gleaned from Genest may suffice to fix the place of this tragedy among Jephson's others.

Vitellia, daughter of Vitellius, seeks the murder of Titus, with whom, however, to complicate matters, she is secretly in love. Sextus, against his better principles and in spite of his esteem for Titus, his friend, joins the conspiracy of Vitellia because of his love for her. Suddenly, Titus, who had proposed to marry Cornelia, sister of Sextus, and had thus injured the feelings of Vitellia, when he finds that Cornelia is about to marry Annius—proposes to Vitellia.

Now completely happy, Vitellia wishes to stop the conspiracy. But she can not find Sextus, the capital is fired, and the plot revealed. Sextus is condemned to die and, resolving to be the best Roman of them all, will not, though they promise to spare his life, reveal the conspirators. Vitellia, remorse-stricken, now confesses her guilt to the Emperor and he pardons her and all the conspirators and recommends to Vitellia that she marry Sextus.

The Conspiracy, true to Garrick's ancient prophecy, was a failure. It lasted for two performances and on the third played "to empty benches."

The following comment by James Boaden suggests a cogent reason for its failure:

I have had great pleasure in commensurating the esteem of Mr. Kemble for Captain Jephson. That author has written a tragedy upon the subject of the *Clemenza di Tito*, called *The Conspiracy*. A scanty dramatis personae on such a subject is not to the taste of our English audience; and the crowded business, with which Shakespeare fills his Roman stage, is absolutely essential unless, with the unsullied splendor of Addison, you have such a personage

²⁵ *London Chronicle* (1791), p. 168.

to present as Cato himself. Mr. Kemble was the Sextus of *The Conspiracy*; Mrs. Siddons, Vitellia; Palmer, Titus.²⁶

There remain to be considered two literary works of Robert Jephson outside the realm of drama. These are his *Roman Portraits* and *The Confessions of James Baptiste Couteau*.²⁶

The object of *Roman Portraits*, according to the reviewer in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, is to blend information with amusement. The plan of the work is to put into verse the "great and striking events" with didactic sections in the general character, policy, and manners of the Romans. No single volume in our language, the reviewer adds, contains so much instruction for all ages, and it is a book for the master as well as the student. He speaks of the author's "sublimity of fancy" and thinks that he resembles Dryden, but that he is "not imitated but transfused into this work."

The reviewer proceeds to suggest that Jephson translate the works of Virgil to fill a need and concludes by remarking that *Roman Portraits* should become a part of the course of study in seminaries where youth is first taught to know the classics.²⁷

The Confessions of James Baptiste Couteau, in two volumes, supposedly written by a French revolutionist and translated from the original French by Robert Jephson, Esq., but in reality written in French, in part, by Jephson himself and then translated in order to give a semblance of authority to the volumes, was the next venture of the Irish author, and probably the last.

A reviewer in *The British Critic* finds it to have "the lively spirit of Voltaire's *Candide* without its immoral tendency." The same critic considers it remarkable that Jephson could continue "a strain of grave irony to the extent of five hundred pages." A hint of its content is given when the reviewer mentions that the volumes contain a broadside against a "disaffected Dublin newspaper, *The Evening Post*." One wonders—the old feud? or a new one? Surely, old publisher Faulkner has tottered into his last resting-place by now.

²⁶ *Memoirs of John Philip Kemble*, IV, 191.

²⁷ *London Chronicle*. p. 191.

²⁸ *The Gentleman's Magazine*, LXIV (Part II), 1122.

A notice in *The Gentleman's Magazine* is not so favorable as the preceding review. It follows:

The Confessions of James Baptiste Couteau. Citizen of France; written by himself and translated from the original French by Robert Jephson, Esq., illus. with 9 engravings. 2 vols. This is an attempt to turn into ridicule the enormities of France since the frenzy of revolution and reformation seized upon that unhappy country, and to laugh into philanthropy those who cannot be reasoned with. It may be very clever, and it may be a translation from the French, but we profess ourselves unable to discover the one, or to divest ourselves of doubt concerning the other.²⁰

The characteristics of Jephson's plays may be summarized briefly as follows: They are poetic tragedies, written consciously in imitation of the great tragedies of Shakespeare, but with the supposed refinement of French-classical technique. The plays in which this deference is most noteworthy are *The Law of Lombardy* and *Julia*. The tone of the plays derives from the "terrific school of fiction," commonly called the Gothic, and the strange lights and shadows, the monastic gloom, the phosphorescence of that genre show in Jephson's tragedies, specifically in *The Count of Narbonne*. Jephson's technique is not that of a master. He is oftentimes clumsy and rarely does he achieve smoothness in the manipulation of entrances and exits. The language of the plays rises frequently to an inspired level, but it is too often intricately metaphorical, and the long soliloquies and declamatory speeches destroy the efficacy of passages of merit.

Jephson is the product of his period. In that period he was of some importance as a dramatist and his literary star was of a certain magnitude. He was serious, a thinker, though not a profound one, a poet of uneven power, and manifestly a student of history. His imaginative faculties were good, above the average, and occasionally he rises to the heights. But he has little skill in the depiction of passion and too frequently his eloquence is false. He has no power to overwhelm, to carry us along as a really first-rate dramatist can. But the influences and the literary fashions that shaped his tragedies, his success in pleasing his own public—these considerations forbid us altogether to ignore a dramatist who wrote not for us, but for men of another age.

²⁰ *The Gentleman's Magazine*, LXIV (Part II), 831.

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